

MEMORIES OF THE MISSION FIELD

BY
CHRISTINE I. TINLING

AUTHOR OF
"BITS OF CHINA" "FROM JAPAN TO JERUSALEM"

FOREWORD BY DR. F. B. MEYER

IN this collection of reminiscences the Author deftly draws word-pictures of missionaries among very varied scenes. During her travels in the Orient, it was her privilege to be associated with workers of many nationalities and denominations. In her earlier books she has told of what she saw of educational work in the mission field. In this book the main theme is Evangelism, illustrated by lifelike personal sketches.

Dr. F. B. Meyer says : " We may call them ' snapshots ' which reveal traits and characteristics salient to the vast populations of the Far East. We are allowed to watch these peoples through the eyes of an intelligent and sympathetic witness. I heartily commend this book."

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"BITS OF CHINA" "FROM JAPAN TO JERUSALEM"
ETC. ETC.

FOREWORD BY THE REV.

F. B. MEYER, D.D.

MORGAN & SCOTT L^{TD}.

(OFFICE OF "The Christian")

12, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS
LONDON E.C. 4

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

TO
L. A. S.

FOREWORD

IT is a pleasant experience to be thus associated with the daughter of a life-friend, Rev. J. F. B. Tinling, and to realize that she has inherited so large a portion of his passion for the service of humanity in the Name of Christ. Already the books in which she has delineated her specific service for the Womanhood of the Far East have met with wide acceptance ; but these pages contain the record of many other phases of life and work which have arrested her interest. We may call them snapshots, which reveal traits and characteristics salient to the vast populations of the Far East.

Slowly and inevitably these populations are awaking from the stagnation of millenniums. For better or worse they are feeling the impact of our civilization. The missionary, the trader, the cinema, the wireless, the interchange of student life, are conveying to these Eastern peoples new conceptions of life. Whether we wish it or not, they are claiming to be treated by the maxims and practices in vogue in our Western hemisphere. They are forcing their way into the common household of humanity, and demanding room and place.

It is of the highest importance, therefore, that we should understand them, as they are trying to understand us ; and we ought to study them, when they are acting simply and naturally, unaware that they are being observed and photographed by unexpected snapshots. We must not only understand, but allow for the influence of national idio-

synocrasies, if they and we are to live amicably and helpfully together in the Human Household.

This view of the matter enhances the value of this book of sketches. We are allowed to watch these far-away peoples through the eyes of an intelligent and sympathetic witness. Our interest is enkindled, and our judgment clarified. We feel the pulse of the same human heart, and learn to sympathize with them in their efforts to break through the shell of the conservative past. Is it not thus that we fall in line with the divine purpose?—for God hath made of one blood all the nations of the world, has appointed their seasons, and set the bounds of their habitation !

I heartily commend this book.

F. B. MEYER.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS book is a plain, unvarnished tale of mission work, as seen between 1920 and 1924. It is obviously impossible to correct it up to date, and could this be done, it would result merely in confusion, and would resemble one kodak picture taken on top of another. At the moment of publication all is chaos in China. Yet must we hope that the work so sadly interrupted will in due course be resumed, and that this crisis will turn out after all to the furtherance of the Gospel.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. SNAPSHOTS FROM SYRIA	9
II. THE WIDOWS OF BRINDABAN	17
III. SOME OF CALCUTTA'S CONTRASTS	25
IV. NEWSPAPER EVANGELISM IN JAPAN	33
V. HALF A DOZEN HEROINES	41
VI. THE MAN FROM PING-LIANG	47
VII. CHINA NEW YEAR	55
VIII. A THREE-FOLD CORD	63
IX. A SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS	69
X. A MISSIONARY'S "EXTRAS"	77
XI. ON SHANTUNG'S SHORE	85
XII. AMONG CHINESE FACTORY GIRLS	93
XIII. BEAUTY FOR ASHES	101
XIV. ONE OF HIS JEWELS	107
XV. SHIPWRECKED SOULS	113
XVI. TWO TYPICAL GROUPS	127
XVII. FAITHFUL OVER A FEW THINGS	139
XVIII. MISSIONARY HOUSEKEEPING	147

MEMORIES OF THE MISSION FIELD

CHAPTER I

SNAPSHOTS FROM SYRIA

IT was a perfect spring day when we drove by motor from Haifa to Beyrout. Haifa is the ancient Carmel. The mountain overlooks the sea, and that afternoon there was not a single cloud in sight. A bright blue sky overarched the deeper blue beneath. It was easy to imagine Elijah's servant standing on the summit, eagerly scanning the horizon for the faintest sign of rain.

Between two punctures and the long-drawn-out troubles of a Swiss scientist with the Customs, we lost three hours on the way. But the scenery was such that one could not wish that drive to come to an end.

First we skirted the Bay of Acre, running on the hard sand of the beach. There is a glorious sense of freedom in thus racing over a broad expanse, with the sea-breezes blowing in one's face. Groups of black cattle were here and there dipping their feet into the tiny waves. White gulls and black crows wheeled above in striking contrast.

When we took to the road, there were green banks on our left, planted with cypresses and palms. On our right were rolling, grass-covered hills, and beyond, in the distance, Mount Hermon in its snowy purity. The fields were carpeted with yellow marguerites, which were the more intensely golden seen against that wonderful background of blue. The air was fragrant with the scent of orange blossom, for now we were passing groves where fruit and flower were both at once to be seen upon the trees.

Perhaps the most arresting sight on this trip was the road itself. It is a new wonder. Formerly there was only a dangerous path along the cliffs. It was not practicable for vehicles, and all traffic had to be carried on by means of mules or pack-ponies. This ancient and much-travelled trail was known as the Ladder of Tyre.

But now British soldiers have built the motor-road which is a joy to the tourist and an untold boon to the merchant. Its gleaming line follows the cliff and curves up and down, like a switchback railway. It is safe (provided chauffeurs are careful), easy, and beautiful. A glorious panorama is spread out below. On the road itself brilliant red poppies stand out here and there against the dazzling whiteness of the chalk, and Lebanon shines in the distance, luring us on.

But nearer, on our left, is a city lying in the sea. It is none other than Tyre, of which the prophet wrote: "O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, thou hast said, 'I am of perfect beauty.'" The glory of Tyre has long since departed, but the situation is superb. The precious stone has been

spoiled, but the blue enamel setting has not changed. Passing by this relic of ancient greatness, we cross the Leontes and speed on toward Sidon.

The old necropolis of the Sidonians extends along the side of the road, with its hundreds of rock tombs. Valuable remains have here been discovered by archæologists. Sidon is so situated that the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes are applicable : " Behold, on either side the restful mountains and the restless sea." For it lies upon the shore at the base of the Lebanons. Fine orchards of oranges, lemons, and apricots beautify its suburbs.

The coast between Sidon and Beyrout is rocky and picturesque. The road runs along a narrow strip between the mountains and the sea. Darkness fell long before we reached our destination, and it was not until I stood next day on the verandah at the mission-house that the beauty of Beyrout burst upon me.

There is an American University here, upon which no expense has been spared. It is a wonderful place, and occupies a splendid site. The same mission has a fine High School for girls. During my short visit to the city, I stayed at the British Syrian Mission as the guest of Miss Meta Johnston. With several colleagues, she is doing a grand work for young Syria in the girls' boarding-school.

The industrial department of this institution is specially interesting. That girls without means may be enabled to make their way, there is a weaving school in a separate building. The students take sheep-skins in the raw state and make very pretty rugs. First they wash and then dye them.

They use vegetable dyes for the most part, such as madder and logwood, but also cochineal. Evidently economy is studied in this branch of the work. An old army soup-boiler stands out in the courtyard, and it is here that the dyeing is done. Sometimes the wool is used in its natural state, and it is surprising to see what effective patterns can be thus produced. Between a black sheep and a white one there are many shades of grey or brown !

After the dyeing comes the combing. The girls use a couple of metal carders, something like wire hair-brushes. They place some wool on one of these and comb it with the other. Then it is ready for spinning. The old-fashioned wooden spinning-wheels, worked with the foot, answer the purpose perfectly well. Now comes the artistic part of the work. The clever missionaries have so studied design as to produce a very desirable rug.

In this same building the girls weave cotton cloth for their school uniforms and for those of the hospital nurses. They do not spin the yarn ; this is bought, and they weave it into an exceedingly good and durable material. They make pretty checks and stripes as well as the plain cloth.

Out in the courtyard, blind boys were busy caning chairs. Others were making brushes and straw mats. Miss Johnston pointed out one boy in particular who had been through a very cruel experience. After having spent some time in the mission-school, he went to visit his family. He told them what he had learned of the glad tidings of a Saviour's love. This aroused their bitter animosity. Apparently they had expected him to

take the industrial training and the material help, and to keep clear of the religion. Blind as he was, they beat him unmercifully, until they had forced him to say, "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His prophet." They forbade him ever to go near the mission-school again.

In spite of all, he groped his way back. Acknowledging with sorrow his failure to stand firm, he asked for baptism. Now, having broken all family ties, he is preparing to make his own way in the world. Blind, but brave, does he not put many of us to shame?

Under the same roof, younger pupils, also blind, were studying with a blind teacher. They sang to us in Arabic and read aloud very fluently. The book they used had only been received the previous day, so it was the more wonderful that their fingers travelled so quickly over its pages.

The dear little maid who took care of my room was an Armenian girl. Her story gave an awful reality to the general facts with which we are all familiar. Her family was once prosperous. The Turks ordered the men of the village out of their homes, and murdered them one bright morning. Her father was among them. The mother took the three girls and the little brother and wandered forth with other refugees. They had several animals and considerable money. Over and over again they had to buy the lad's life, so their savings were soon exhausted.

Their cousin was shot down in cold blood while crossing a river. The aunt, being one day overcome with fatigue, fell off her horse and was

instantly murdered. The Turks, in fact, made a practice of killing those who fell, and seizing their mounts. The wretched and heart-broken band went from place to place, being every little while compelled by their tormentors to move on again. Every move found their number diminished.

This mother, with her four children, finally sought the protection of a British officer. When he saw them, he could scarcely believe that she had succeeded in holding them together through those awful months. Now two of the girls are in the British Syrian School, doing nicely and working for their living. But their minds have received impressions, and their systems a shock, that can never be effaced. Far more truly than Dante have these young things traversed the nine circles of hell.

In Damascus we saw a camp of six thousand refugees. They carry on business in shacks and tents. They are willing to work for very little, saying, "We only want bread." This, however, in itself constitutes a difficult economic problem for the city, since the residents can hardly compete with them. They are capable people and very religious. There is a service at the camp nearly every night, and for the most part the attendance is good.

In this wonderful city, lying in its green oasis in the midst of the desert, I was again the guest of the British Syrian Mission. Here is another good school for girls, under the care of Miss Strong. The church is an active centre of evangelistic work.

While the supreme aim of Missions is to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, they are helpful

in a great variety of secondary ways. Even unbelievers, did they but visit them, could hardly withhold their appreciation. The education given in the schools affords to multitudes of young people a fair start in life. The industrial work renders helpless ones self-supporting. This sort of thing is going on quietly all over the world.

CHAPTER II

THE WIDOWS OF BRINDABAN

BRINDABAN, in North India, is a sacred city of the Hindus. It is devoted to the worship of Krishna, being connected with his early life, and it is popularly known as his "playground." Pilgrims from all parts of the country resort thither by myriads, and heathen festivals are continually being held. There are not many places which more deeply impress one as being wholly given to idolatry.

The city boasts of numerous handsome temples, the finest of which is the Govind Deva. It is of red sandstone, and is said to have been at one time seven storeys high. The Mogul Emperor, Aurangzeb, chanced when travelling to notice this imposing edifice, and asked what it might be. Learning that it was a Hindu temple, he promptly ordered his men to knock the top off it, saying that no building should be higher than the Mosque of his own Mohammedan faith. Such, at any rate, is the tale.

A singular characteristic of the place is that it has no pillars to hold up its heavy dome. Its high arches, too, have no keystone. Strange to say, while the architecture is thoroughly Indian, the general plan is that of a Greek cross. It is not known who was the architect, but probably European influence is responsible for this design. To be

familiar with the symbol, but utterly ignorant of its meaning—how unspeakably sad !

Outside the temple the grinning monkeys hop and skip and chase each other. Inside, in the shadow of the lofty dome, scores of bats cling together, in a black mass, uttering weird squeaks. The floor below is made filthy by their droppings, and this is supposed to be a holy place ! Between them, these two animals vividly suggest the grotesqueness and the foulness of heathenism.

The Shah-ji temple is an elegant building, with white marble pillars in front of it, of unusual spiral form. It attracts attention also by the row of striking statues on the roof. What may these represent ? They are the milkmaids with whom Krishna is said to have sported as a boy. While they were bathing, he played a practical joke on them, and took their clothes. The same god stole a pat of butter, and his images show him running off with it. How can men of any character respect deities so much inferior to themselves ?

The temple dedicated to Rang-ji occupies an area nearly eight hundred feet long by four hundred and fifty broad. Within its extensive quadrangle white marble pavilions, with their many pillars, stand out sharply against the bright blue sky. Here also are three gopuras, those highly decorated pyramidal towers which are built over gateways, and are mostly found in the South.

As we walked on the wide terrace we noticed a wooden cage, and were told that this was a sort of pound in which troublesome monkeys were occasionally confined. It is difficult, again, to enter

into the state of mind of those that will worship an ape as a god and yet clap him into jail if he does not behave properly !

A large tank is one of the chief features of the temple. Along its entire length flights of steps lead down to the water, and here the pilgrims perform their ablutions. At *mela* time sham battles are fought between the crews of different boats. They are supposed to illustrate certain events in the life of Krishna.

As we stood beside the water, which reflected in its depths the pagan architecture, we thought of the tragedies which it has silently hidden. For the tank was a convenient receptacle for little bodies, until the British Government put a stop to this awful use of it. Our missionary friend asked a priest whether the custom of destroying the babies had quite ceased. He frankly replied in the negative, adding that nowadays they were dropped into the Jumna instead. This lady, a representative of the American Methodist Mission, said that sometimes the poor mother will bring her child to their compound rather than drown it. About forty such have been received during the few years since she has been there. One of these we saw. She was a bonnie little lass, in a bright sari, happy with her foreign friends, loving and loved. But for one thus saved and trained for service, many must be rotting under the water. Such is heathenism's slaughter of the innocents.

The mothers, poor things, are hardly less to be pitied than the babies. A cruel fate has made them what they are. There is an extensive slave

traffic in Hindu widows, and they are gathered up in hundreds for the temples, for the convenience of pilgrims and priests. They also sweep and clean, grind grain, and otherwise prepare food (short of cooking it), and take care of the dwelling-houses on the premises.

Some of them once owned a little money. They were inveigled into surrendering it to the temple on the promise of a maintenance for life. This so-called support is but a beggar's dole. Daily a little uncooked rice, or dhal (pulse), or spice is handed out, and occasionally a few sticks of wood. That is all. When the poor creatures find out their mistake and try to retract, they cannot get their money back. They are caught in one of Satan's traps.

Every morning the temple widows are required to sing hymns to the gods for four hours on end. Could more exquisite satire be conceived of? They have lost everything that a human being has to lose; they have been debased below the brutes. So they must, forsooth, chant solemn praises to the divine being to whom they are indebted for all this!

We saw them. There were perhaps three or four hundred sitting on the floor in a couple of sheds, arranged in straight rows. A third congregation was out in the open, under the bright blue sky—a pitiful contrast with the beautiful and joyous nature around them. One little woman sat apart by herself, with bowed head, a picture of utter misery.

“Krishna, hori Krishna, Radha,” they chanted in an endless invocation to that god and his consort.

And the clang of cymbals mingled with their dull voices. The faces were unforgettable. It was their utter emptiness that made them tragic. They reminded one of Tennyson's poem about death :

“ Life and thought have gone away,
Side by side,
Leaving doors and windows wide,
Careless tenants they.”

No life, no thought, no love, no hope was there—in each case just an empty house. A company of corpses would have been hardly more terrible.

Sometimes they come to the mission hospital, where there are two women doctors. It is discouraging work to try and help them, for they go back to the old life when better. They know not what else to do. Sometimes, however, the loving service brings a great reward and makes up for many days of fruitless toil. One morning a suffering widow was dumped at the door of the Brindaban hospital. She was supposed to be done for, so a message was left that the temple had “ no use for her any more.” She did not die ; she became a Christian. Her new friends sent her away to Pakaur, where there is a home for widows. For four years she stayed there, learning Christian truth and preparing for Christian service.

Now she has returned to the scene of her sorrows, to work among her fellow-sufferers. Who can reach them so well as one who knows from experience every detail of their lives ? Already she has considerable influence. Freely she has received, and freely is she giving ; her happy purpose is to

make many rich with the wealth that she has found in Christ.

In this very religious city there are annually some forty-five *melas*, or festivals, making an average of almost one a week. These attract vast crowds from the surrounding districts. Whole families come in together, some on foot, some in ox-carts, and others in vehicles drawn by camels. They stay for periods varying from a few days to six weeks.

There is very little preaching of the Hindu religion; the chief feature is entertainment of different kinds. Merry-go-rounds, snake-charmers, lotteries, and acrobats hold their several groups in the large courtyards. The acrobats are truly wonderful. A man will climb a pole some forty feet high and lie down on the top of it, with the tip forming a pivot in the small of his back. On this he revolves like a wheel, arms and legs all going at once.

With so many opportunities for amusing themselves, the worshippers are able to get rid of a good deal of money. The priests provide facilities for obtaining it, and have a regular banking system in connection with the temple. Needless to say, they keep a sharp look out for the return of loans.

A woman was cooking the family rice in the courtyard one day during *mela*, when a monkey jumped on her and knocked her down. She was badly hurt. In this predicament she sought the mission hospital, and the doctor patched her up again, taking twenty-five stitches in her face! She had to leave before she was fit, because her husband had borrowed so much money from the temple.

When they started home the priests sent a man along to bring back the family cow.

These great *melas* offer precious opportunities for the spread of the gospel. Missionaries naturally could not expect to preach within the temple precincts, but they can mingle with the crowd and enter into conversation with small groups. They sell Gospels and give away tracts in large quantities.

Nor do they toil in vain. Three of the priests in that great Rang-ji temple have become obedient to the faith. Thus, even where Satan's seat is, trophies are being won for Christ.

CHAPTER III

SOME OF CALCUTTA'S CONTRASTS

CALCUTTA boasts of no little magnificence. Here East and West meet, and the architecture of each is seen at its best in the setting of tropical foliage. The imposing white buildings of the Government House, in the style of Queen Anne, were an expression of Lord Wellesley's large ideas more than a century ago. The Victoria Memorial, about twenty years old, reflects in the water below its splendid domed pile and noble staircases, and forms a landmark for miles around.

Chowringhee Road is one of the renowned drive-ways of the world. While on the one side there are shops, clubs, theatres, and picture palaces, such as are to be seen in any modern city, on the other stretches the Maidan, or Esplanade, Calcutta's own grass-covered playground. Here the "flame of the forest" rises like a beacon fire, in vivid contrast with the darker foliage of the banyans and the casuarinas. The Maidan was a tiger-infested jungle in the old days; it was at the time of the erection of Fort William that it was cleared and cultivated. In one corner of its broad expanse stands St. Paul's Cathedral, a graceful Indo-Gothic building with its "star-y-pointing" spire.

The post office is a beautiful Oriental edifice, with lofty columns and shaded verandahs. The

promenade above the river, known as Strand Road, is a testimony to modern enterprise, for here the land itself was once deep under water. The Hooghli presents an interesting picture, with its crowded jetties and the many steamers from distant ports lying at anchor, surrounded by a multitude of smaller craft that dance attendance on them.

I was staying at the Baptist Mission, a spot redolent with precious memories for Christians of all persuasions. More impressive by far than the fame of Governors-General, architects, or merchant princes, was the thought of that prophet of God, whose tablet is to be seen in the church next door, and who, with his two colleagues, wrought such mighty marvels in the early days of missions. Elsewhere in the city one saw the chapel of Carey's own building, the chair in which he used to sit, and the little closet where he was wont to pray. Serampore itself lies about a dozen miles to the north of Calcutta, across the Hooghli.

That the triumvirate, Carey, Marshman, and Ward, should have given to India a college that was progressive beyond the dreams of even advanced educators, besides establishing a network of churches and free vernacular schools, and should have translated the Bible, in whole or in part, into thirty-four languages, is an instance of truth that is stranger than fiction. Truly there were giants in those days!

The appalling heathenism which nerved them to such heroic tasks still faces the Christian Church to-day. While it is in evidence wherever one may turn, perhaps one gets the most vivid view of it in a visit to Kalighat.

Of the immense vogue of Kali's worship and the vast quantities of animals and food-stuffs offered to her in sacrifice, Mr. Ward wrote thus : " On days when the weather is unfavourable not less than 320 pounds of rice, 24 of sugar, 40 of sweetmeats, 12 of clarified butter, 10 of flour, 10 quarts of milk, a peck of peas, and 800 plantains are offered, and 8 or 10 goats sacrificed. At great festivals forty times this quantity is offered, and forty or fifty buffaloes and a thousand goats are slain."

We saw some of those same sights when we wended our way to that darkened shrine, which is held in such deep veneration by all sects of Hindus. Beggars were squatting along the side of the road, in their rags and filth, as we passed over the bridge that leads to the temple courtyard. Worshippers were going in and out, and privileged bulls here and there mingled in the throng, or poked a nose, unchallenged, into a vegetable shop. The vendors of garlands and bouquets were doing a brisk business. Perfume filled the air, and blossoms and petals littered the stones in those narrow alleys under the sinister shade of Kali's walls.

Awful indeed is that idol itself. We could only get a vague notion of it as we strained our eyes in the semi-darkness, for we were not allowed to approach within several feet. But I bought a picture of Kali such as many an earnest soul carries home as an aid to devotion. Nothing could be more horrid, more blood-curdling, than this conception of deity. She has three red eyes and a pointed tongue which reaches down to her waist. Of her four arms, one is to bless and one to curse,

one to bestow gifts and one to take them away. She wears round her neck, not merely garlands of flowers, but a far more appropriate adornment in the shape of a chain of human skulls.

We met a party coming away from the temple, each of whom was carrying an image of the monstrosity for worship in the home. One would naturally suppose that people must be very primitive who could bow down to the like of that. Not necessarily so, however. A carriage had just stopped as we emerged from the alley-way into the road. The family group now alighting to worship the goddess were evidently, from their dress and manner, people of refinement. Oh, the unutterable pity of it !

Yet there are some here at home who tell us to leave the heathen to their own religions, which doubtless are suited to them ! Is it possible to conceive of this horror being "suited" to any creature in the shape of a human being ?

Most tragic of all is it to think of the influence of such a sight as this upon the mind of a little child, which is "wax to receive and marble to retain." A young mother was going to pray as we entered the courtyard. Her face was pathetically sad, which is the rule rather than the exception with India's women. She held in her hand a small tray, containing tiny cups roughly moulded out of mud. (A spoonful of castor-oil, with a bit of lint to serve as wick, completes the miniature lamp used in worship.) Her little son tripped along by her side, to receive from that bloodthirsty monster his first impressions of deity. Since that day, more

than hitherto, "I think, when I read the sweet story of old," of such boys as he, brown-skinned and black-eyed, but just as bright as ours, who even now in the twentieth century are being daily taught the cult of the devil. "I wish they might know there is room for them all, and that Jesus has bid them to come!"

The missions are doing a great work. There is united effort in the Training College for women teachers, as well as in the Missionary Language School. The Church Missionary Society offers higher education to women, and the London Missionary Society has a strong work. The two Scottish missions (the United Free and the Church of Scotland) "carry on" together, in the Scottish Churches College for men, which is indissolubly connected with the name of that missionary statesman, Dr. Alexander Duff. The American Methodists have about thirty missionaries in this one city. The B.M.S. employs two hundred and fifty men in its Mission Press, and puts out gospel literature in twenty different languages. It is reaching university students in its two hostels, which are under the care of an Indian missionary. In spite of all these splendid undertakings, however, it is only the edge of the need that is being touched.

But although the sum-total may be small in comparison with what remains to be done, of a truth the actual value of each bit of faithful effort is too high for human estimate. Just one heart of girl or boy turned to Christ instead of Kali is surely worth any labour and any sacrifice that it requires.

I have one charming memory of a united meeting

of girls' schools, in which the different delegations participated very happily, each school rendering one item in the programme. Four sweet-faced girls sat on the floor in their gaily bordered saris, and delighted us with their Indian music. These were from the Lee Memorial School, a well-known private enterprise founded by two American Methodists, Rev. D. H. and Mrs. Lee.

One of the students was named Shoela, and was very fair to look upon. She was in her second year in college, Mrs. Lee said, and her younger sister was in the Normal School. It was because they both happened to be girls, and there chanced to be no boy, that their mother was disgraced and rejected. Another wife was put in her place, and she became the slave of the household. She stood it during the life of her mother-in-law, who was kind to her. But after her death she took the two little girls and departed, travelling by night in order not to break purdah. Some relatives of her husband had become Christians, and to them she fled. They took her to Mrs. Lee. Welcomed in the mission, the forsaken wife found comfort and peace, and was soon earnestly learning to read. In due time she became a Bible-woman, teaching other sad and lonely souls that there is One who cares. She and the elder daughter have visited their old village in vacation time, and carried the message there, receiving a hearty welcome from the women-folk. Both girls are earnest Christians, and bid fair to have careers of usefulness before them.

It will be recalled that the Lee Memorial Mission embalms the memory of those six happy children

who died in the landslide of Darjeeling in 1899. The eldest boy, Wilbur, was found next day half buried in the mud, a hundred feet down the mountain-side. He lived long enough to testify that God had taken all fear away from them. "We were so happy," he told his mother. "We said to each other, 'Now if papa and mamma and baby Frank were only here, and we could all go to heaven together, how nice it would be!'" Vida's face was like an angel's as she talked to us! Then there was a tremendous crash, and the wall came in, and I knew nothing more."

Even in the awful days that followed, the parents could say it was the one desire of their hearts that God's purpose in this great mystery might be fulfilled. Bereft of their darlings through the long years, they have laboured with redoubled energy for the boys and girls of India. Mr. Lee has recently passed away.

The mission, besides the large girls' school, with its normal department, has a boarding-school for boys and a Kindergarten. There are thirteen day-schools under its management, each having a Sunday school connected with it. Fifteen Bible-women teach in the Zenanas, and the colporteurs are selling some twelve thousand Gospels a year. One and all, the workers are seeking to lead Indian children, as well as older people, into the light. From many a heart there has risen the cry, "Not to Kali, but to Christ, I come! Not to her baneful image, but to His blessed Cross!"

CHAPTER IV

NEWSPAPER EVANGELISM IN JAPAN

BEAUTIFUL for situation is Hiroshima, with its background of forest-clad mountains. These set off to advantage the delicate loveliness of the gardens and the peaceful picturesqueness of the river. Those gardens are a surprise to the visitor, for he comes upon them suddenly, on emerging from one of the narrow streets of little wooden houses. They belonged formerly to one of the *daimyos*, or great territorial nobles of Japan, but now they are public property.

Their chief beauty is the lake, and the artistic Japanese have added immensely to its charm by the bridges they have here and there thrown over its narrow inlets—quaint, all of them, and often very graceful.

The azaleas were in full bloom at the time of our visit. Like a pink garland, they surrounded the lake, and gave a tender touch to the rocky paths of the labyrinth. Here and there, in contrast with the green foliage around it, there flamed a bright-red maple, its leaves seeming to radiate the sunlight, a veritable “burning bush.”

But not in these exquisite gardens did we find the chief interest of Hiroshima. The name had stood for something quite different. We had heard of the work of Rev. W. H. Murray Walton, of the

Church Missionary Society, and the story had made a strong appeal both to our enthusiasm and our common sense. Hence, on our arrival in this beauty-spot with the musical name, one of our chief concerns was to see the missionary.

We stepped into a couple of rickshaws, my Chinese friend and I, and the lithe little men trotted us briskly down street after street. Perhaps one should rather say "alley after alley," for the narrow thoroughfares were unpaved and destitute of sidewalks. However, the dolls' houses on either side, though frail-looking, were suggestive of cleanliness and comfort. At last the runners entered a courtyard and deposited us at the door of a Japanese house, the floor of which was covered with the usual spotless matting. Within its walls we found the missionary we sought, with his charming wife and two dear little children.

It was the idea of evangelism through the newspaper that had especially won my interest, and I was glad to learn more about it. Hiroshima is the name not only of a city, but of a province with a population of about two millions, living for the most part in small villages. This province or "ken" varies from eighty to ninety miles in length, and is about thirty-five miles wide. Its hamlets are scattered among the mountains, and are connected, not by good roads, but by primitive and often impracticable paths. It is simply impossible for the missionary, or even the native worker, to reach the souls in these hidden haunts, for, as everywhere in the mission field, the labourers are few. They would need to be multiplied thirty-

fold for the message to be carried by the human voice.

Neither is there much more hope in connection with the distribution of the Scriptures and of Christian literature, for these also require a messenger to deliver them. But there is one influence that penetrates where neither missionary, nor evangelist, nor colporteur can go, and which reaches a thousand where they can reach one. It is the ubiquitous newspaper.

In this province there are three papers, which together have a circulation of about twenty thousand. Reckoning that each paper has five readers, they must reach some hundred thousand persons a day. This is a conservative estimate, for the news is posted up in the barber's shop and other public places, so that "he who runs may read."

In the whole province, including all Protestant denominations, there are about twenty-four missionaries and perhaps fifty Japanese workers, if one counts Bible-women, pastors, and catechists, but not teachers. How many persons are daily reached by these seventy odd, one cannot attempt to calculate; but one knows that the printed page of the newspaper touches the incomparably greater number aforesaid.

The missionaries, therefore, are seeking, as never before, to use the public Press as an agency for Christ's cause. The pioneer in this movement is Rev. Albertus Pieters, of the Dutch Reformed Church of the United States. The missionary whom we visited did not profess to be inaugurating a new movement, but he was developing the

idea with remarkable thoroughness for his own province.

There were many difficulties in getting Christian material into the leading papers, but these were overcome by persistent faith. At present, some of the best published writings on the fundamental Christian doctrines are being used, chapter by chapter, in regular sequence in their columns. In addition, articles have been secured from men occupying positions of influence in Japan—here a judge, and there a man of social prominence. At the end of each article is an announcement that Mr. Walton will be glad to hear from any who are interested in the subject.

After this work had been in running order for only about four months in the province of Hiroshima, letters were received from one hundred and fifteen villages, or nearly half of the total number. Only about sixteen of these had previously been reached by missionaries or evangelists, so this means that a Macedonian cry had come from almost a hundred different places where there was no witness for Christ.

The follow-up work is of the greatest interest. Every correspondent receives a personal letter, a copy of St. Luke's Gospel, and other Christian literature. He is invited to borrow books from the library, and in order that his need may be the more exactly met, he is asked to answer a few questions regarding himself. These concern his profession or business, his religion, education, previous knowledge of Christianity, and other points.

One of the most striking things about the whole

enterprise is the thorough business efficiency evident in every detail. By means of the card catalogue and the filing cabinet, the missionary can instantly refer to any case and give the whole history of it. He can also see at a glance the main points of previous letters. Those who are led on, through this personal and sympathetic intercourse, to a deeper interest in Christianity, are encouraged to take a correspondence course in the fundamental Christian doctrines. All who can come into the city are warmly welcomed at the New Life Hall.

The most convincing proof of the value of this newspaper evangelism is to be seen in the personal letters of seeking souls. As we sat in the little office, the Japanese secretary, a man who has suffered many things for Christ's sake, and is well adapted to help his fellows, drew forth letter after letter, written on the thin rice paper in fair characters. While he read aloud the strange-sounding sentences, and Mr. Walton translated them for us, we realized in some measure the tremendous import of these human documents. We felt that each one stood for a soul that was seeking immortality.

Here are a few words from one of them : " I am nineteen this year. Up to now I have taken an indifferent and almost rude attitude toward God and man. I have even laughed at your earnestness in publishing the Gospel. . . . I have promised God that my evil life shall be changed, and I have received His forgiveness. That my heart has been changed in this way is a gift from my teacher. I am very grateful."

The following, too, is very gratifying : " I have

received your articles from time to time, and though I cannot explain it, a strange emotion has risen in my heart, and I have an earnest desire now to meet God, as a result of the articles. I have now great joy in my heart."

Here is one which shows how conviction of sin has come to at least one man through these newspaper messages. It is the more interesting because the sense of sin is, as a rule, conspicuously absent. "Thank you very much for your kindness in sending me the leaflets and books. Since my birth I have done many wicked things, and that I continue to do them even now shows that I am a very bad man. When I read the book you sent, I immediately fell on my knees before God and realized my sin, and made a vow in my heart that henceforth I would follow God's way and learn His teaching. Instead of doing my own will, I shall always do God's, and I have made a solemn promise to myself that I will not forget the Word of God."

The cost of newspaper space works out at a little over one penny annually for each copy of the paper. In other words, this almost infinitesimal sum will send the gospel the year round to one home in Japan. So I was informed when I visited Hiroshima. The cost is a little higher now. Mr. Walton has since been moved to Tokyo, but is carrying on the same newspaper work as before, with the hearty backing of the Bishop and the Japanese Church.

More than twelve thousand persons have now written to him, asking for information in regard to Christianity. The majority belong to the younger generation of educated men. Nearly one thousand

have joined the New Life Society, which means that they are studying under the guidance of the missionary and his Japanese colleagues, or have completed a course of instruction. Some 12,000 books have been loaned from the Library, of which only 62 have been lost, and these chiefly in the post. It would appear that Japanese borrowers compare favourably with the average Briton !

The workers find their opportunities so multiplied that they know not how to cope with them. But though they be "pressed out of measure, above strength," they dare not relax their efforts. Each case must have individual attention and the best that they can give. A man writes, for instance : " If it is God's will for men to be saved, please save me. It is rude of me to ask you bluntly like this, but I want to walk that way of salvation with you." That sort of letter requires a reply by return. It is an S.O.S. call, flashed out to the unknown life-savers from the midst of darkness and storm.

Christians in the home lands may render valuable help by praying about the newspaper messages and the personal correspondence that grows out of them. " The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man " offered in England or America, " availeth much " far away in Japan.

CHAPTER V

HALF A DOZEN HEROINES

IT was said of the Master, "He saved others ; Himself He cannot save." The same is true in a real though limited sense of His disciples. Effectually to save others it is needful that they sacrifice themselves ; worthily to enrich others they must give their all. This is well illustrated in the mission field. I would not dare to guess how many hundreds I have met in the Orient who count not their lives dear unto themselves for the joy of giving out the gospel.

For the moment, memory wanders free and dwells haphazard on a few examples of this great principle of sacrifice. Just a handful of women let it be this time—half a dozen heroines. No names shall be mentioned. If, from the accompanying details, they happen to recognize themselves, they will doubtless demur. "We were only doing our daily work," they will say. True, they were doing just that, carrying the light of the gospel into one little dark corner : teaching, healing, comforting a few of the poor, the ignorant, or the diseased. They were spending and being spent. That is all and that is right ; they do not call it sacrifice.

Korea is a beautiful little country, three-quarters of it being occupied with mountains. They are never out of sight. The white, foaming torrents

that come dashing and splashing down their sides offer, with their background of living green, as charming a picture as one could wish to see on a summer's day. But such scenery does not mean easy travel for the itinerating missionary.

On one occasion an American friend was describing her experiences. She went with her Bible-woman from village to village among the mountains. The path was about two feet wide, and it was slippery from recent rains. On the one hand rose a wall of rock, and on the other there yawned a precipice some two or three hundred feet deep. She could not ride her horse here: it was necessary to lead him. On the muddy path he would often slip as much as a foot at a time.

The most ticklish part of such trips was the turning of corners. Here she could not even lead her beast, but had to throw the bridle to the Korean woman in front. The latter would reach out over the precipice and catch it again. It was the same way when there was steep climbing to do. The missionary and her horse had to scramble up as best they could, and meet again at the top.

The greatest danger was in winter-time, when they came upon an icy stretch where the only thing to do was to slide. " 'Try not the pass,' the old man said." But was she to leave those weak and ignorant Christians unhelped and untaught the whole winter long? No. The Angel who had thus far redeemed her from all evil would go with her to deliver her. So still she "clasped, mid snow and ice, her banner with the strange device"—a better than "Excelsior," even the standard of the Cross.

The various epidemic and endemic diseases of the Orient offer greater obstacles to missionaries than even the mountain walls. Malaria may not be sudden and fatal, like bubonic plague or Asiatic cholera, but it is a terrible hinderer of Christian service. It is hard to keep going when one's vitality is being sapped by oft-recurring chills and fevers.

I remember another worker in this same field of Korea, a woman of frail physical constitution, but of indomitable courage. Like the other, she goes over the mountains, seeking lost sheep. Even in a circle where all are earnest and devoted, she is recognized as pre-eminently a saint. I was staying in the mission-house after she had returned ill from a country trip. When the attack came on, she was riding one of the rough little Korean ponies. She felt obliged to push forward to the next point, where the people were greatly counting on her visit.

Relating the experience, she said simply, "I rode till I could ride no longer" (she could not hold on, in fact), "and then I walked till I could walk no longer. Then I lay down by the side of the road." It was all in the day's work, and she thought nothing of it. But one wished that people at home could understand a little better what it costs to carry the Message.

An Australian friend working in Kansu—that far province in China's great north-west—could tell many a tale of hairbreadth escapes. She travels in a mule litter, a sort of hammock swung between two animals, walking tandem. From personal experience, I can say it is a doubtful pleasure even on a decent road. But travelling out there, along the edge of precipices, with the realization that

"there is but a step between me and death," takes more than ordinary courage. Never will she express a fear, lest she should hinder the Gospel of Christ. Does she not represent One who is mighty to save, in every sense?

Sailing down the Yang-tse once, I shared a cabin with an English missionary. She and her husband had come out to Central China long years before. He was stricken with cholera and was gone in a few hours. She took the children home and stayed with them. But so great was her love for the Chinese, that through eighteen years she kept up her study of the language. She had then returned, and her daughter, a full-fledged doctor, was soon to be her colleague. Her only boy had given his life in the Great War. She is an unassuming woman, and not fond of public notice. But she is one of "the plain, heroic breed" the poet sings about.

So is that American nurse whom I met in East China. She was supervising twin hospitals for men and women. When myself a patient, I saw behind the scenes that noble life of constant self-effacement. The hospitals were models of efficiency. She was training a staff of young men and women, instilling into them ideals as well as ideas. She had no health to boast of, and had recently suffered from an attack of angina pectoris. Maybe it was the "first call," but the thought does not disturb her. The last, however sudden, will find her ready to report.

One day we sat under the trees in an Indian jungle. A Christian *mela* was in progress, and we had just heard a lecture on the conservation of health. "It hit me hard," said the lady doctor,

with whom I was sharing a tent. "When I returned from furlough, I resolved to take exercise every day. But I have not done it."

Missionaries should take good care of their health, for their work's sake, they are often told. Why did not she? Well, first she had had her own hospital to superintend. Of this she had sole charge. Then there were outside calls. Once a week she went to another hospital sixty miles away and put in a hard day there. On her return, she tried to make up for lost time. Once a month she gave two days to a third hospital some distance off. It was under a native doctor, and he saved up the critical cases for consultation with her.

"I am willing to burn my candle at both ends," she said, "if that is best. But it does not seem economical." The policy of her Home Board may be open to criticism, but the doctor is undoubtedly a heroine.

What is the motive-power for such self-sacrifice as is faintly hinted at in these six examples, taken at random? It is the greatest force on earth, the dynamic of love. It is love for Him who first loved us, and love for the souls for whom He died. George Macdonald truly says :

"Love alone is great in might,
Makes the heavy burden light,
Smooths rough ways to weary feet,
Makes the bitter morsel sweet—

Love alone is strength.

Love is stronger than all force
In its own Eternal Source.
Might is always in decay,
Love grows fresher every day—
Love alone is strength."

CHAPTER VI

THE MAN FROM PING-LIANG

FEW people, probably, outside of China knew anything of Ping-Liang previous to the Christmas of 1920, when the news flashed over the wires that Kansu had been visited by a terrible earthquake.

Shock followed shock during those fateful hours, till twenty-five distinct disturbances had been recorded, accompanied by terrifying sounds in heaven above and in the earth beneath. So severe was the convulsion that the seismographic needle was broken in the observatory of Tokyo, nearly two thousand miles away.

The disaster affected a wide area, including several walled cities and hundreds of villages. In Tsinchow seven houses out of every ten were laid in ruins. The swaying of the earth caused a large clock to strike, and it tolled and tolled in the most gruesome way, as though to announce fresh deaths every few moments. Houses were seen to rise and fall; whole villages disappeared as if by magic; dwellers in the mountain caves were buried in the collapse of their poor abodes. Foreign estimates, far lower than those of the Chinese officials, put the total death-roll in the province at nearly two hundred thousand.

The city of Cool Plain, which is the literal meaning of Ping-Liang, lies in a fertile valley, watered by the

river Ching, which joins one of the tributaries of the Yellow River. The mountains form a crown which completely encircles it. Very peaceful they look when the long shadows sleep on their green, velvety sides. The big boulders and the bare rocks, the natural bridge and the swirling waters beneath, combine to make a peculiarly attractive picture. The famous Phoenix Mountain, known as Kung Tung, rises to the height of ten thousand feet, and the traveller can descry from a distance the historic temple of Huang Cheng, nestling among the trees upon its slope.

It so happened that the very day after the news of the earthquake had startled the country, I met a man from Ping-Liang. Mr. Törnvall, a Swedish missionary connected with the China Inland Mission, went to China thirty years ago, and soon afterwards made an attempt to settle in this ancient city. There was no other gospel messenger within its walls, and unless he could effect an entrance, the fifty thousand souls in that important centre must still remain in ignorance of the Good News. He realized from the first that medical help would afford the best possible point of contact, but, unfortunately, he had had no training whatsoever. One small book and some homœopathic remedies formed his stock-in-trade, and having studied the former, he set forth with his little black bag to make friends with the people.

A poor old beggar woman was his first patient. She was daily carried to her stand on the street and taken back at night to a dug-out beyond the city wall. The man who carried her used to push a large stone against the opening to keep out the wolves, and there she had to stay, come what might,

till the stone was removed next day. Her eyes were badly affected, and she was more than half starved. To the surprise of passers-by, the stranger might every day be seen treating those eyes by the roadside, and before long they began to improve. He also brought her a small piece of bread when he made those visits. It cost practically nothing, as he said, but it won the poor old heart.

At last the missionary succeeded in obtaining a dilapidated house, and he proceeded to put it in repair. He was not long left in peace. The mandarin sent one of his servants on the main street with a gong, to make an announcement to the following effect: No man might rent a house to the "foreign devil" or even sell him food, and if any one should dare to help him to whitewash a wall or put up a ceiling, his head should adorn the door and hang there as a warning to others.

During this boycott, when the very necessities of life seemed about to be withheld, the servant of God rested on the unfailing promises, and was not disappointed. He never lacked for food. He was cared for as truly as Elijah, for every morning the bread and flesh were deposited outside his window. At first he could not tell whether the ravens had wings or merely hands and feet. He only knew they were very punctual, and the provision they brought was ample. Sometimes it was pancakes and onions, and again bread and meat and perhaps eggs. These things always appeared very early in the morning, and there was no sign of the donor. But one day he was up betimes, and saw, to his great surprise, a well-known Chinese business woman.

He had had no idea that she was interested in the gospel until he found her that morning risking her very life for its sake.

Thus providentially helped, the missionary stayed at his post, and by degrees the opposition died down. Instead of trying to starve him out or otherwise ill-treat him, the officials next politely asked him to leave the city. With equal politeness he replied, "Please excuse me. I am very content here among your people." They then called a meeting to decide definitely what was to be done with this very peculiar "foreign devil" who insisted on living where he was not wanted. The officials arrived in sedan chairs, and the general public was admitted to the hearing. After various speeches, pro and con, the presiding officer gave an opportunity for remarks from the floor. Thereat, to the surprise of all, the old beggar woman rose to her feet and hurried forward. "Do you want good people in this city, or not?" she said. "You all know me, and you know I was almost blind. This man has helped me. He is a good man. You ought to be glad to have him stay." She gave her fearless testimony, just like the blind man in the gospel story and almost in his very words, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." After this no further opposition was offered, and the meeting broke up.

A little later there occurred one of the Moham-medan rebellions which from time to time have desolated that north-west region. A large contingent of soldiers was sent into the province of Kansu to repress the rising, and there must have

been as many as twenty thousand in the city of Ping-Liang. The climate is exceedingly cold up there, and it was a terrible winter. The soldiers suffered dreadfully with frost-bite, and not a few died. There was one young fellow from Hunan who had a very bad leg, and he ventured to consult the foreigner about it. Here is the story, as nearly as possible in the missionary's own words :

" I told him that if he did not have the leg amputated he would be a dead man in a few days. The poor fellow was very anxious to see his mother, and for that reason he decided to submit to the operation. I consulted the commanding officer, and he also was in favour of it. ' I have never done anything of the kind in my life,' I told the patient, ' but we have a God who is always ready to help in time of need. I will speak to Him about it, and I am sure He will hear my prayer.'

" I had no instruments," continued Mr. Törnvall, " except a Swedish penknife and an American saw, but I boiled them well and did the best I could. I had another book by this time, on anatomy, and I had studied it. I kept it by me during the operation, and looked from the diagrams to the leg as I cut. I did it on the verandah, and the neighbours gathered round to watch the performance. I had no ether or chloroform, but used a hot salt solution as a palliative. The boy did not say anything during the operation, but broke down and cried when I had finished. ' Why do you cry now? ' I asked him, ' since it is all over.' ' Because I shall never be able to use that leg again,' said he, looking ruefully at the dismembered limb, lying near. In spite of

these painful thoughts, however, he refused to part with it, but dried it in the sun that he might carry it home to his mother.

“I made him a wooden leg, which was very primitive, of course, but answered the purpose. He was exceedingly grateful that his life had been saved, and on recovery he started for his Hunan home. He walked across country from Kansu to Hunan, except as he had a chance of an occasional lift, and finally, after several months, he reached his mother. Better still, he found his Saviour, back there in Hunan.” The Word had sunk into an honest and good heart, and in due time it sprang up and brought forth much fruit.

It may seem to some to have been a very risky thing for an untrained man to attempt such an operation as this. Risky it was, in truth, but it was his own life that was endangered by the attempt and not the patient's. The soldier was a dying man, and he had nothing to lose and everything to gain. The missionary, even without any medical training, was incomparably more capable than any of the native doctors. After this, the people gave him their confidence. They brought him patients, and he was forced by circumstances to open a rude hospital for such cases as he could treat. There, through long years of service, his wife was his efficient colleague. Son and daughter, when they had reached years of discretion, went back to Ping-Liang to help their parents.

In spite of various difficulties the work has grown wonderfully. The church now has a membership of about one hundred. There is a prosperous

Sunday school and a girls' boarding school, and an earnest group of Christian workers. One of the finest of these is the woman who used to put her pancakes on the window-sill in those early days. Years ago she gave up her business that she might devote herself to telling the glad tidings to the sad and needy ones around her. She accepted a position as Bible-woman, and went into the homes with the Word of God, but never took one cent of remuneration from the missionary society. On the contrary, when there was a great famine in that district, she opened three restaurants in different parts of the city, and provided food at her own expense. The people were told to bring their own bowls and chop-sticks, and on arrival they were seated in the waiting-room, and listened to the wonderful story of the love of God, from her lips, before receiving the gift of food. The steaming hot soup and rice were themselves proof enough of the practical change which faith in Christ works in human hearts. At one time, when the missionaries had to leave for a while, this woman carried the whole burden of the work. Surely the thought of such Chinese Christians should be full of comfort in these days of chaos !

The old beggar woman was among the brightest witnesses for Christ. Beggar no longer, but a child of the King, she was lovingly cared for by the Church. The Chinese are fond of giving people special names or designations, and they called her "the star," because her face was always lit up with an indefinable radiance. Thus does our God take "the beggar from the dung-hill to set him among

princes"; thus does He reach down to the most helpless and hopeless and place them in the galaxy of His chosen ones, to shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever.

Ping-Liang to-day has its Christian church, which easily seats six hundred persons, and on special occasions has been crowded again and again. A little town in America sent the present of a bell, which can be heard forty *li* (thirteen miles) away, and is itself a reminder of the good tidings of great joy which are meant for all people.

Other missionaries have gone there and done good service, but in a very real sense the noble work that may be witnessed to-day is the result of the faith and courage of that one man, poorly equipped but fully consecrated. How many college-bred and highly trained people will have but little to show for their lives in comparison with him!

The qualified doctor, so eagerly longed for, never came. Recently the brave pioneer has been called up higher, and the hospital is waiting for a man. Sufferers are sighing, "Oh, Lord, how long?" Is there no young physician who feels the magnetic attraction of a greater need, a greater opportunity than he finds in his home-city, overstocked as it is with professional men? Is there no one who longs to use his medical and surgical skill as a direct means for leading souls to God—who aims, not merely to "make good," but to make the very *best* of his life? Ping-Liang needs such a man as that. When the troubles are over and the doors are opened again, will that doctor be ready to start?

CHAPTER VII

CHINA NEW YEAR

IN the Middle Kingdom, with its lunar chronology, the New Year is a movable feast. But even the newcomer does not need to consult a calendar to be aware of its impending advent. There are many things to attract attention and to suggest an interference with "the daily round and common task."

This is the time for settling all debts. Not one is supposed to be left unpaid beyond the last day of the last moon, and the final scramble for money leads to much quarrelling and some stealing. Occasionally it involves the lamentable episode of a suicide.

For several days the shops are closed, and people spend their time in amusing themselves and visiting their friends and relatives. Many presents are exchanged, being carried about by servants on open trays. New scrolls are pasted up on the sides of the doors and on the lintel. Scholars may be seen sitting outside, brush in hand, writing characters on red paper for a few cash a scroll.

As we walk up and down the streets we are struck by the new door gods that abound on every hand. These are often pictures of two redoubtable warriors who once actually existed and after the lapse of time were deified. But there are many different

door gods, such as the rooster, the unicorn, and the coiled dragon, each having a special signification.

The kitchen god is thought to go up to heaven in the smoke on the twenty-third of the last moon, to give his annual report to the Pearly Emperor. The people seem to have a wholesome fear of this deity of pot and kettle. They refrain from burning dirty things in the kitchen, lest they should annoy him, and they prefer to do their quarrelling when out of his reach. No wonder he is held in high respect, for he is supposed to keep the family from starvation. And there is also this other reason for reverence, that he is said to be the Prometheus of China, who first taught the people how to produce fire.

Before he leaves for the upper regions they burn incense on his altar, and offer him candy and tea. Sometimes they smear his mouth with molasses to sweeten his report, but there are those who maintain that this is done in the hope that his lips may stick together, and he may be unable to speak at all. One also hears of opium being given to him, and naturally concludes that this is in order to send him to sleep. But such is not the theory. Rather, the drug is offered as being the thing in which men most delight, so that presumably the gods will enjoy it also. "They that make them are like unto them," and *vice versa*. Apart from revelation, the human mind does not conceive of a holy God.

Noise is perhaps the most striking characteristic of China New Year. Not that the Chinese can claim an absolute monopoly in this respect. There are some American cities which run a close second

to those of the Celestials. The maddening midnight din made by every available cracked can and tin whistle, competing with the church bells and murdering their music, would certainly be hard to beat. But the Western riot lasts only for a long five minutes, whereas the Oriental hullabaloo continues for days on end. Fire crackers by the thousand keep popping off at brief intervals, often uncomfortably close to the bewildered pedestrian.

One New Year's Day, however, that I spent in Szechuan was not at all like the usual hilarious festival. All the customary demonstrations were forbidden by the Governor of the Province, and the resultant quiet seemed quite uncanny to old residents. The reason for this prohibitory ordinance lay in the fact that an enemy army was known to be on the march towards the capital, though still some hundreds of *li* distant.

That afternoon some of us took a walk into the country. Among the crowds that were strolling about, the gayest figures were the little girls. Wars and rumours of wars might reduce the popular rejoicings almost to the vanishing point, but they could not prevent these dainty damsels from donning their best bibs and tuckers for the nonce. Many were in bright-coloured silk, and their faces were painted with rouge. There was no attempt to disguise Art to look like Nature ; they have never heard that " the perfection of art is to conceal art." Neither have some Westerners ! The stuff was put on quite thick, and was expended as lavishly round the eyes as upon the cheeks. Sometimes half a dozen red spots adorned the forehead !

We visited several temples of historic interest, one of them about nine hundred years old, pleasantly secluded among its sombre trees. Not far distant there is another, noted for two brass goats that stand before the doors and are said to cure disease. The sufferer comes and rubs that part of the goat's anatomy that corresponds with his own troublesome member, and goes away in faith that a change has been wrought within him. Maybe there are cases in which auto-suggestion actually accomplishes a cure. On this New Year's Day we saw people, some of them apparently intelligent men, thus seeking relief. Several rubbed the goat's head, and one poor fellow passed his hand over its stomach.

The individual who impressed me most forcibly on this occasion was a young mother, with a gentle, refined face, who visited the temple, leading her little son by the hand. She knelt in the deepest reverence before a huge, hideous idol, her head bowed, her hands spread out upon the floor in front of her. While people passed to and fro, and stood talking beside her, she remained utterly absorbed, her lips moving in silent prayer. After continuing thus for some time, she opened her eyes, and received from an attendant the box of bamboo sticks in which she was to find the answer of her god. She shook it until one dropped out, and this she carried away, to have its mystic symbols interpreted by the priest.

The New Year season is characterized by feasting, which lasts on and off for two weeks or more. Not only is there an abundance of good things to delight the palate, but there is a meaning in them too.

Dumplings are a favourite dish, or, one might rather say, an essential feature of the festival. Their round shape is suggestive of completeness and augurs well for the opening year. Dough strings also are lucky, on account of their length, which is a symbol of longevity. Even stale rice is considered a desirable article on the menu, for it is a sign that you will have plenty in the granary and some over at the end of the year.

Wine has its place upon the board, and libations are offered on this occasion to the various gods. People do not often become intoxicated at these feasts. In fact, one might stay in China for years and not see any cases of inebriety. On the other hand, one day during my visit to Chengtu, there happened to be two drunken men upon the street. One of them was hugging a lamp-post in true Anglo-Saxon style, and then violently shaking it and trying in vain to bring it down. Perhaps it is true, as some suggest, that the habit of drinking among the lower classes, which obtains in Western nations, is not general here, simply because Chinese labourers do not have the money to spend.

There is a good deal of indulgence in official circles, both civil and military. In fact, a military banquet often ends in a drunken spree. There is a smart "modern" set, who affect foreign dinners and foreign wines. They are wild and wealthy, and they "go the limit." An American gentleman described an official function to which it became his duty to go, and told me that before it ended he had a General hanging round his neck, maudlin drunk.

There is a good deal of liquor used in restaurants.

Indeed, it is so much in demand that certain Y.M.C.A. workers, Chinese, felt it not worth while to open a restaurant in connection with their centre, because they were convinced that a temperance house would never pay. They may, of course, have been mistaken, but their attitude is suggestive of the general condition.

There is a certain guessing game, connected with drinking, which is widely practised in China. As men sit around a table together, one challenges another to a guess. There are finger-signs standing for the different digits, and the challenger throws forth his hand, making the sign of any number that occurs to him. Simultaneously the other man does likewise. At the same time they both call out the number which they guess to be the sum-total of the two. If both are right or both are wrong, it counts for nothing. But if one is right and the other wrong, the latter pays a forfeit by drinking. The whole object of the game is to make the other fellow drink, if possible, to the point of intoxication, while the challenger himself remains sober. After ten guesses, another couple takes a turn at the game.

We do not need to attend social functions in order to be acquainted with this custom. We see the fingers thrust out and hear the quick call of the numbers as we pass along the street. During that New Year season just referred to, a Sunday-school teacher was giving a treat to the little girls of her Primary Department. In the course of the afternoon, having left them for a few moments, she returned to find them deep in a game. "What are you playing at?" she asked, thinking that

probably it was "Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe." "We are playing at getting drunk," they replied innocently, and it was with this game of their fathers that they were amusing themselves.

The guessing game is only one of several methods for the encouragement of social drinking. There are also after-dinner toasts, and when one is proposed, it is considered essential that the glasses should be emptied. The men, in fact, hold them out for inspection, crying, "Kan pei! Kan pei!" which means "empty glass." Sometimes a member of the party lights a match, and it is passed round from hand to hand. The man with whom it goes out has thereupon to drink. These customs are not peculiar to New Year, but may be observed at any time. They all go to show that drinking is far more general in China than many people suppose, though it is not carried to excess anything like so often as is the case in Western nations.

Those mites above-mentioned asked their teacher one Sunday afternoon, "Please can you tell us where to get pills to cure the opium crave?" Doubtless they had been instructed so to inquire. But it all shows with what an evil bias many of them begin life. For another thing, they learn to gamble as soon as they can talk, for the candy-man has a sort of spinning-top connected with his tray, and according as it stops at a lucky place or otherwise, they get more candy or less for their cash.

As all the world knows, gambling and opium are the monster evils of China. The New Year season offers special temptations to indulge in games of chance. The mere fact of having nothing to do

for a couple of weeks naturally sends people to the cards and dominoes. Many who do not play at other times, relax their principles during the holiday. Men and women, rich and poor, give themselves up to the excitement, regardless of consequences. And the little ones, only too quickly, take it all in.

China will have much to do before her house is set in order. Not to mention others equally baffling, she has an opium problem, a morphine problem, a gambling problem, and more or less of a liquor problem. It is not for Christendom, with its sad record of failure, to cast a stone at her. The attitude of the West should be one of sympathy. But we wonder how she is ever to settle any one of her difficulties unless she first learns the essential principles of government. Years ago the condition of the country was described by an experienced missionary in these few words, "Chaos ! and getting worse instead of better !" The event has surely justified his gloomy outlook.

Is there, then, any hope for this distracted country ? Surely none, apart from the knowledge of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the gradual triumph of Christian principles in public life. As of old, so to-day, there is none other name under heaven whereby nations or individuals may be saved from sin and its consequences.

CHAPTER VIII

A THREE-FOLD CORD

WE were out at sea in the middle of China. It was a surprising experience to wake up in the morning and find "water, water everywhere." Of course, I had seen the Tong Ting Lake marked on the map, but I had never grasped the fact that it covers an area of more than four thousand square miles. As a matter of fact, sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't! It depends on the weather and the time of year.

The province of Hunan is only semi-solid. It is sometimes described as being three-tenths hill, six-tenths water, and one-tenth plain. Its many rivers, running into the lake, and thus connecting with the Yang-tse, give almost unique facilities for travel. It is estimated that no fewer than thirty thousands junks enter the port of Hankow from Hunan during the year.

My friend and I, when making a trip to Changsha, did not, however, need to board a junk. We took passage on a British steamer, carrying, together with a cargo of freight, a large number of Chinese passengers, and also making provision for a few foreigners. One had perforce to take the best accommodation that the boat offered, as foreigners are no longer allowed to travel in Chinese style. The companies desire their dollars.

So we had state-rooms furnished with electric light, fans, and mosquito-nets, and, in fact, all the comforts of an ocean liner. There was only one other first-class passenger, a Chinese gentleman, who spoke French perfectly, though not English. So in quietness and ease we steamed up the Yangtse, across the Tong Ting Lake, and thence up the Siang River to Changsha, the capital of Hunan.

When one remembers how recently this was a closed province, one is filled with wonder at the sight of the missionary institutions established there to-day. Only sixty years ago did Josiah Cox, the representative of the English Wesleyans, make the first Protestant attempt to enter that unfriendly region. Some five years later, Dr. Griffith John and Mr. Alexander Wylie must have passed that way, returning from Szechuan. But it was only in 1898 that a foreigner at last succeeded in hiring a house and settling down among the people.

Now there are nineteen different missions at work in Hunan. They include British, American, Canadian, German, Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish Societies. There are also the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., international and interdenominational, and the China Inland Mission, first in the field, which partakes of the same character. It will be remembered that it was from Changsha that Hudson Taylor went home to God after almost half a century of service for China.

There was much to muse over as one sat in a dainty guest-room on the American Presbyterian compound. Could it be true that only five-and-twenty years previously Christians were pleading

for a foothold here ? How eloquently did the substantial buildings speak of answered prayer and of peaceful settlement ! The girls' dormitory and the homes of missionaries are disposed among grounds singularly attractive. From my window, which opened upon a wide verandah, I could look across to the tennis lawns where Chinese students were enjoying a game. And this beautiful place is only one of several mission compounds.

The Yale Foreign Missionary Society has been doing a remarkable educational work, through its colleges and associated schools. Affiliated with this " College of Yale in China " is the " Hunan-Yale College of Medicine." Between them they offer to men, in this far inland province, a thorough Western education.

But wonderful as it all is, there is nothing in Changsha more intensely interesting than Dr. Frank Keller's programme for the evangelization of Hunan by Chinese Christians. The doctor represents the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. He has three big " concerns," as our Quaker friends would say. They are the evangelistic bands, the training-school, and the production of gospel posters.

These three closely linked interests all serve the cause of missions as a whole rather than any one society, though Dr. and Mrs. Keller personally are C.I.M. missionaries. The bands visit any station to which they may be invited ; several missions send men for training to the Institute, and widely scattered workers avail themselves of the opportunity to secure posters. It is its helpfulness to all branches of the Christian Church in Central

China that gives to Dr. Keller's work its peculiar value.

The evangelistic teams are called Biola Bands, from the initials of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. There are now thirteen of them, ten of which are itinerating in Hunan and the other three in the neighbouring province of Kiangsi. Each band consists of twelve men, living on a boat, with a leader, who instructs them in the Bible and in methods of evangelism.

Their daily programme is on this wise. The early morning hours are devoted to prayer and study of the Scriptures. From ten to four they go, two by two, from house to house, explaining the Good News privately and personally to all who will listen, and leaving behind in every home some little leaf of the Tree of Life.

Returning to their boat as the afternoon draws on, they have an early supper. Following this, they report the day's experiences, and the logical sequence is a prayer-meeting. Refreshed in body and spirit, they sally forth again, this time probably armed with a bell, and carrying paper lanterns, which announce an evening service. Those with whom they have come into personal contact during the day have already been invited. The meetings are frequently attended by several hundred people. Two students preach every night, and those who show an interest are formed into Bible classes. These are held daily during the sojourn of the Biola Band in the district, and inquirers are subsequently cared for by the missions under whose auspices the Band has been working.

Sometimes there is a daily meeting for children, when the youngsters hear Bible stories and learn texts. The singing is a special feature, and through the hymns the truth is carried into many a heathen home. Strangely contrasting with the firing of crackers and the beating of gongs for the appeasing of some malevolent spirit, comes the musical message of the boys and girls. It tells of an old, old story, which, however, is new to many of the hearers.

These Chinese workers get their results on the spot. They may not be familiar with Carey's dictum, "Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God," but this is exactly what they are doing. In a place where a Band was recently working, twenty-seven persons became Christians. One of these, a leading business man, gave a large room for use as a chapel, and the rest raised the money to furnish it.

Writing about another Band, a missionary said, "I wish you could have seen one of the men starting off with a donkey-load of boards on his shoulder, in the broiling sun, with forty-five *li* to traverse." (This is equal to fifteen miles.) "He is spending his summer vacation helping to erect a building for a little self-supporting church at his home. Into this building he is putting not only his last dollar, but no end of good, hard toil to get it ready for the dedication service before he leaves for Nanyoh."

That name Nanyoh stands for great things. It is situated at the foot of a sacred mountain—one of five such in China—which attracts each year

thousands upon thousands of pilgrims. Every September, Dr. Keller's men gather here. The student body of the Bible Institute, together with delegates from a large area, come for a summer course in the midst of the glorious mountain scenery.

They study half the day under the best teachers available, both Chinese and foreign, and the other half they do personal work among the pilgrims. Like Philip of old, they join themselves to individuals who are returning home, and preach Christ unto them.

At one of their conferences a stranger asked leave to speak. He said that eight years previously he had come as a pilgrim to worship at a heathen shrine, and had received a little book from a man on the road. After reading it, he was convinced of its truth, and became a Christian. He had now come to look for that man to whom he owed so much, and to bring to the Conference the greetings of the church of which he was a deacon. Since that day the one-time pilgrim has become an evangelist, and is working under a missionary society. He is one of many who have been remarkably converted as a result of this primitive and practical plan of evangelism.

CHAPTER IX

A SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

THE success of the Biola Evangelistic Bands in Central China is in no small measure due to the careful training the men receive in the Bible Institute at Changsha. Here there is given an eminently practical and withal deeply spiritual preparation for evangelistic service. Various missions avail themselves of its help.

Its growth has been wonderful. In 1919 there were two graduates, and the exercises were held in one of the classrooms of the Chinese house hired for school purposes. In 1924, no fewer than forty-five received their diplomas—forty-one men and four women. Their farewell service was held in the large auditorium of the Institute, known as the Milton Stewart Hall.

When I visited Dr. and Mrs. Keller in their Chinese home, the new buildings were in process of erection. Classes were still being held in the rambling Chinese house. It was my privilege, during five consecutive days, to give Temperance lectures to the men, and one cannot forget their eager attitude toward the whole question. They were much interested in hunting up texts from which they might themselves preach Temperance sermons.

Plain, uncultured men from the farms most of

them were, working hard to prepare themselves for Christian service. They were making good intellectually as well as spiritually, for the Chinese have a high average of mental ability.

One lovely object-lesson was constantly before them, whose teaching maybe sank even deeper than the best classroom lecture. The aged mother of Dr. Keller was there. Rather than let her son leave his work to care for her, she went out to live with him. The students must surely have had a keener sense of the value of the message when they saw how this dear old lady had uprooted herself from home and country rather than hinder their getting it.

The Assistant Superintendent of the Institute is Mr. M. K. Hsiao. He holds a high place in the affection and respect of the churches throughout the province of Hunan. He teaches homiletics, pastoral theology, and comparative religion, and his lectures are enriched from the varied experiences of many years of service.

It is possible now to receive women into training, since there is a new dormitory to place at their disposal. The first students are doing well under the fostering care of Mrs. Keller.

Music is specially emphasized because of its great value in evangelistic work. Besides the singing classes, there is opportunity for those who wish to take lessons on the harmonium. One hour a week is given to the study of pedagogy.

The immediate practical use of what is learned in school is one of the things insisted on. In the New Testament classes, there is each day a five minutes'

address from one of the men, which is freely criticized by his fellows and the teacher. In the teeming city of Changsha they find ample opportunity for translating theory into practice. Several missions welcome the help of the students, as do also some of the institutions operating under the Provincial Government. The Hunan-Yale Hospital has an arrangement with the Institute by which the latter takes charge of the evangelistic side of its work.

Then there is the constant opportunity of the street chapel. Nothing could afford better training than this. A man must be pithy, good-tempered, and concrete, if he would hold his hearers, for they are under no obligation to remain a moment longer than they feel interested. The street chapel congregation is an extreme instance of a floating population. Many stay for about five minutes. Most of them know nothing of the gospel and may never hear it again. Things must be so said that they will stick. Rambling oratory will be useless, even though earnest.

After two years of well-balanced study and practice, the students are ready to go to work. Those who have been assisted by scholarships, and any others who can afford the time, join the Biola Bands, and spend a couple of years in evangelism under adequate supervision. These workers receive suitable salaries. The others return to their several missions. It is proved, however, that those missions reap a much fuller benefit when they allow their men to serve an apprenticeship on the gospel boats before settling down to the care of a church or out-station.

Dr. Keller's third specialty is posters. He has brought them to a pitch of perfection, and has his men trained in the art of putting them up. Two in each Band attend to this matter. The posters are lithographed, and are tough enough to stand a good deal of weather when closely pasted. In the Chinese streets, there is not the exposure that we have in our broader, Western thoroughfares. Some posters have been known to remain up as long as six years, and Dr. Keller considers a single year's wear by no means satisfactory.

There is at the top of the sheet some title that will attract the eye of the passer-by. Beneath it comes a striking text. In smaller type the interested reader finds a suggestion that he go to some Gospel Hall for further information. Printed in bright colours and large characters, these messages cannot fail to arrest attention, especially when a team of evangelists puts up several hundred at a time in a single city. Hunan and the neighbouring province of Kiangsi have been fairly well sown with this good seed, but the work might be extended all over China if sufficient funds were forthcoming. Dr. Keller delights to send grants to missionaries far and near, whenever friends at home make this possible.

One missionary said to me, "These are the things the Chinese admire. Dozens of men will stop in front of a poster, and while one reads they all listen." A lady worker mentioned that some of the Christians pasted the posters outside their doors as a constant witness for Christ. Another spoke of them as a great help to open-air preachers,

who, taking their stand beside one, will use it as a text.

To give one more instance : a missionary, itinerating in the province of Kiangsi, mentioned that she had herself visited forty villages and pasted up one of Dr. Keller's posters in each. An old man and woman who had recently renounced their idols begged for one of them to put in the vacant spot. So the message of salvation has taken the place of the ugly picture of the Kitchen God. Doubtless, there will be many inquiries from the neighbours as to the meaning of the strange sentence on the wall.

The poster work, while so quiet and simple, is of far-reaching usefulness. The masses may jostle along the crowded street unheeding the silent witness, but here and there an individual finds what he has long been seeking. Pardon and peace are freely offered, and this sheet of paper means new life for him.

These, then, are the three bits of the King's business with which one comes into touch on that Changsha compound—personal evangelism by the boat teams, the training of recruits for service, and the preparation of posters calculated to stick in more senses than one.

Everything is done with the greatest thoroughness, and itemized reports are sent in by the workers. When privileged to make observations on the spot, one marvelled at the minuteness of detail in the records as much as at the magnificence of the general scheme. The work of the Bands is so much appreciated by missionaries that they are booked up for

months and sometimes years ahead. But nothing can account for their wonderful success, except the power of the Holy Spirit, working through men and women who are filled with a love for souls. The converts are gathered one by one ; thus it has been from the beginning.

Some time in the 'nineties Dr. Keller was one day preaching and dispensing medicine with his Chinese assistant, when a wretched man came for treatment, suffering with ulcers on his legs. He was a barber, and as such very low in the social scale. Under the old régime it took several generations before the stain of barber-ism could be sufficiently removed to allow a member of the family to go to school. This poor man was in dire extremity, and could scarcely stand on his feet. Dr. Keller gave him medicine, but added that it would avail nothing if he did not rest. He replied that rest would be starvation, as he lived from hand to mouth.

Finally, the doctor took him into his own hired house, and there fed him and nursed him back to health. In those days he could not speak much Chinese, but the fingers that dressed those ulcers twice a day were more eloquent than a tongue. And the native evangelist explained what it all meant. The man became a Christian, and immediately received an unmistakable baptism of the Spirit. This so much impressed the evangelist that he got a new view of the grace of God, and he sought and obtained a great uplift in his own life. The barber in his turn became a preacher of the Good News, and is to-day the leader of one of the Biola Bands.

It was personal kindness that opened his heart. It was the love of God looking out of human eyes, felt in the touch of a human hand, that conquered him and claimed him. It is that personal touch that counts, whether with or without such material assistance as the medical missionary can give. A practically infinite multiplication of such individual effort is what is needed in China, as indeed everywhere else. Dr. Keller says, "If only we could have six parties in every province, in five years we could preach the gospel in every untouched home in China."

The critical state of things at the present moment should not cause any to take a gloomy view of the outlook for Christianity. A lack of responsible government for years together would lead to disturbances in any country. The mob is easily inflamed, and there are not lacking paid agitators to kindle its passions. The missionaries often say—"Anything may happen." Bolshevism is essentially anti-Christian and it is bidding for China. But the fact remains that the people, when not influenced from without, are more ready to listen to the gospel than ever before.

CHAPTER X

A MISSIONARY'S "EXTRAS"

THE wind wails over a broad plain, brown and bare just now, for the crops have not begun to come up. Many graves are dotted here and there in the parcels of ground owned by peasant farmers. Standing out conspicuously on the landscape is the ample compound of the American Board Mission, surrounded by a solid wall. It also boasts an eight-foot, brick-faced dyke which incidentally affords a fine promenade. It is built with a view to floods, for these are a chronic menace. When they come, the little mud houses "melt down like chocolate creams."

The mission property is entirely surrounded by the dyke, the two gate-houses being the only breaks in it. Hundreds of gunny sacks are kept in readiness to dam these openings. It is the Yellow River, known as "China's Sorrow," which causes these disastrous floods. In some sections its bed is from ten to twenty feet above the level of the plain. Alluvial deposits, brought down from the north, have thus raised it.

The group of mission buildings includes a boarding-school for boys and another for girls, and twin hospitals for men and women. Situate about a mile from the walled city of Tehchow, the station ministers to the need of a large country district.

The coast province of Shantung, in which it lies, is about twice the size of Ireland. It is one of the most thickly populated areas on earth. While very poor, the people are industrious and virile, and endowed with plenty of shrewd common sense. They are mostly farmers, producing wheat and maize, pea-nuts, and sweet potatoes. A good deal of coal and iron is mined in the province, and its silk is world-renowned.

One of my most vivid memories of Tehchow is that of the tearing-up party, just after the fire. Truly it was a melancholy affair. Twelve of us sat that winter's day, scissors in hand, cutting out what scraps could be saved from piles of charred sheets, pillow-cases, and uniforms. Hundreds of bits were all that remained of a big wash.

The fire on this occasion was caused by a careless workman who left the charcoal burning in his iron when he went to lunch. Fortunately, the laundry was in a separate building—though, indeed, it was not really by good “fortune,” but by wise planning, that it was so. The doctor had thus directed at the time of construction, fearing some such contingency. He was away when the fire broke out, and there was no foreigner on the spot, except young Dr. Lois Pendleton and Miss Myra Sawyer, who is in charge of the nurses.

There is no fire brigade in those parts ; people must know how to help themselves. These women did, and they kept their heads. They used the chemical extinguisher, and Miss Sawyer directed the attack of the hospital staff. Boy nurses rushed into the burning building, climbed on to the roof,

and fought the fire so splendidly that they saved the laundry. But the whole week's washing for the hospital and the nurses was destroyed.

The financial loss was no slight matter, and it all fell on the missionaries. This sort of thing was an "extra," not along the line of regular needs, and so not covered by any appropriation. The missionaries knew only too well how the nurses had to struggle to obtain their education and how limited were their wardrobes. These boys and girls must not lose even a few dollars apiece. Better that they themselves should hand over part of the little sum they had saved for next summer's holiday. This incident set one thinking of the "extras" of a missionary's life.

The regular work is itself heavy without any such additions. The one foreign nurse in a station, supervising, as in this case, twin hospitals for men and women, has her time more than full. Besides the care of all the patients, there is the educational work of the Training School, including classes in materia medica, anatomy, hygiene, and bacteriology, all of which must be taught in Chinese. Translation of special material is sometimes necessary.

The Tehchow Training School, opened only twelve years ago, was the first to be provided for the province of Shantung, with its thirty-five millions of people. Here, Chinese students have learned some priceless lessons along with their applied science, even tenderness and sympathy for the filthy and loathsome. Relapsing fever, carried by vermin, affords them cases that take "con-

siderable hot water and soap, plus a razor blade, to make them suitable ward inhabitants."

The thousands of bandits who swarm about the province give them practice in surgical work, such as fractures and gun-shot wounds. Besides the diseases with which we are familiar in the West, cholera appears year by year in epidemic form. Kala-azar, a spleen disease ; tumours that through long neglect have become malignant ; every variety of eye trouble, and plenty of tuberculosis—these and other ills keep the hospital staff sufficiently employed. The dyke encloses a decidedly busy community.

Then, on top of all, come the aforesaid " extras." Music is one of these, and it is well worth the time and effort required, seeing it " hath charms to soothe the savage breast." Doubtless one thing that accounts for the delightful atmosphere in the Tehchow hospitals is the vocal training that the nurses receive in leisure hours. Miss Sawyer undertakes this herself, and gets fine results with her choir and her mixed quartettes.

Morning prayers at Tehchow is a singularly happy and home-like service. The piano stands on one of the landings, and some of the young people gather round it, while others sit upon the stairs above. Their sweet voices float in comforting strains to the patients in the wards. Entertainments of vocal and instrumental music are a great source of pleasure both to inmates and outsiders. But all this means work, and it is among the " extras " of the missionary's life.

War comes. Contending armies draw near to

the city. The railroad is cut. The peasants are panic-stricken. They flee to the foreigners, begging for protection from their fellow-countrymen. So there is a register at the gate of several hundred families who are to be allowed to take refuge in the compound if the worse comes to the worst. Thorough sanitary work will be necessary in this event, and mothers and children will need much personal service. War surely entails heavy "extras" on the hard-working missionaries.

Nursing has been standardized and thus much improved since the formation of the Nurses' Association of China. This body lays down a curriculum, holds annual examinations, and gives diplomas. Nowadays, by passing the national examinations, a nurse has a definite status in whatever part of the country he or she may be. In a mission land there cannot be the variety of machinery that we have at home. Some one must correct the papers each year, and it must be one who is fully qualified to judge. Therefore, it falls on one of the missionary nurses. It was a matter of one hundred and forty-seven sets when it happened to be Miss Sawyer's turn. Maybe, when the characters are deciphered, there will be things to smile over, a little bit of fun to lighten the job. (One nurse wrote that we breathe through our noses instead of our mouths, because the nose has two openings and the mouth but one!) Probably a Chinese doctor will lend her assistance, but even with such efficient help it is no small matter to read and mark these papers. And it is one of the "extras"; it does not count as regular work.

"Extras" are always cropping up in the way of individuals who need special care and love. Hsiao Kwei, or Little Devil, was brought to the hospital a few years ago by her owners. Her mother had sold her when she was six, through pinch of poverty. She had changed hands three times since then, and was now destined for white slavery. The master wanted her patched up, for ill-usage had wrecked her constitution. But Miss Sawyer took steps to rescue her, and was successful. When the last business interview was over, she led the trembling child to the window whence they could see the wicked couple leaving the compound. When she was told that she could stay permanently with her new friend and go to school, her joy knew no bounds. She is now a happy student, delighting in leisure hours to make herself useful in the hospital. The name "Kwei," pronounced in a different tone, may mean "Precious" instead of "Devil." So now the girl is known as "Kwei Te" or "Precious Virtue." She is a deep joy to her missionary friend, but also a responsibility. It costs something to keep and educate a girl. How often in the mission-field does one hear of students who are the special care and charge of some one missionary! They are the last people who ought by rights to be responsible, but they undertake these "extras" willingly. They know that the sacrifice is well worth while. For the most part we don't know it; we are too stupid to take it in. We have never seen for ourselves the needs of the regions beyond, and we lack imagination.

So those others do all that a missionary career

calls for "and then some," as Americans would say. "Pressed down, shaken together, and running over"; such is their contribution. While a small conventional donation, squeezed out under the pressure of a sermon or an appeal, is only too often our response at home.

CHAPTER XI

ON SHANTUNG'S SHORE

CHEFOO is a charming spot in which to spend a summer holiday, especially if one is fortunate enough to secure accommodation at the Missionary Home. Perched up on the hillside, it looks down over garden and shrubbery to the restful sweep of the bay, where the low-lying rocks invite a ramble. There is a counter-attraction in the shape of a breezy climb over the cliffs, which remind one of the English Downs as they drop into the Channel. On the hard sand there is endless fun for the children, while for the elders the place seems "a haunt of ancient peace," with the beauty and without the boredom of a summer resort at home.

This is certainly attractive, but after all it is not Chefoo. One must turn "right about face," and must leave the quiet shore to find the real city, which, by the way, the Chinese call Yentai. It has been a Treaty Port since 1863, and has a foreign quarter of considerable extent. This is well kept, and boasts good roads and modern hotels. But these have no special interest, and do not long detain such travellers as ourselves, who desire rather to investigate things Chinese.

However, before we turn city-wards, let us pause at the compound of the China Inland Mission,

which is no mere foreign residency, but represents one of the greatest Christian enterprises of our age. Hudson Taylor was a wise master-builder, and he laid his foundations deep and strong in more ways than one. Immediate resources might be small and immediate numbers insignificant, but he always planned with a view to the great future which by faith he saw. Chefoo is an example of his far-sightedness. The Mission secured the first piece of land in 1880, and since then, building after building has gone up as the work has expanded, until, to-day, there is a valuable and varied plant, well suited to meet the needs of missionaries and their children. The extensive grounds are prettily diversified by a gully which runs through them right down to the seashore. Its undergrowth gives a rustic aspect to the scene. The more cultivable parts are well utilized for growing vegetables.

It was with a view to a healthy settlement for the children of missionaries, that the C.I.M. bought the Chefoo property, and the schools were opened in the following year. One cannot imagine anything more ideal as to situation. The place is bracing and the sands are safe. Boys and girls whose homes are too far away to permit of their returning for the holidays can live here happily "through all the circle of the golden year." Swimming, boating, hockey, tennis, and cricket are enjoyed under the most favourable conditions. Many parents come to Chefoo for a summer vacation, for the sake of being with their children, and the family groups on the beach, enjoying "togetherness" after long separation, are good to see.

Besides the three buildings of the boys' school, girls' school, and "prep," there are the Chinese and foreign hospitals, and the sanatorium where tired missionaries may find a quiet resting-place. Here they often win health again, instead of having to leave China in search of it. The business department may not attract much notice, but its little building stands for one of the fine characteristics of this Mission, its practical provision for everyday needs. There is a chain of depôts reaching over Inland China from which workers are supplied with goods at low prices. The Mission has its own paper money circulating, even in these dangerous days, without fear of loss, since it would be useless to the finder. The bakery and the laundry may be mentioned in passing. Then there is the prayer-room, where God only knows what victories have been won for the gospel in this land. Last, but not least, is the Memorial Hall, sacred to the memory of those Chefoo schoolboys, thirty-four in number, who fell in the Great War. Everything testifies to the fact that God has wonderfully honoured the faith of His servants who have looked to Him alone for funds.

But we stay too long among the "foreigners." Leaving all this behind and turning inland, we may find much to interest us in the city itself. Here we are face to face with the New China. If we happen to be down town at the noon hour, we shall be caught in the crowd of workers streaming out of the factories, and consisting very largely of women and young girls. For Chefoo is the centre of the hair-net industry. It has also an

important silk manufacture, for it is in the province of Shantung, whose very name spells "silk." There are other factories that turn out thread and twist (also of silk), and some that produce exquisite hand-made lace. Probably, in all, there are about forty of these workshops in the city, most of them small as compared with Western standards, but employing altogether something like forty thousand people.

The English woman who slips her net over her hair in the morning little dreams how far it has travelled. It is much more of a globe-trotter than she herself is in most cases likely to be. The hair may have grown on the scalp of some fellow-woman in the interior of Europe, perhaps in one of those little new countries whose name she cannot pronounce, much less spell. It has been to the United States, and has there passed through the experiences of curing and dyeing. It has crossed the Pacific and travelled by train, cart, or boat to some Chinese village, where children's fingers have fashioned it into a net. It has been carried to the Chefoo factories for inspection and correction, and has finally gone on board a boat bound for the Occident, from which it started. It is estimated that, in 1922, something like two million gross were exported from Chefoo !

When I was in China, doing Temperance work under the W.C.T.U., the missionaries arranged some engagements for me in the factories of Chefoo. So I had the privilege of seeing at first hand some of the excellent social service that is being rendered there. We usually went in the noon hour and

held a meeting in one of the workrooms, or out in the courtyard, as it was summer-time. The women and girls crowded around us, sitting on the benches as closely as they could squeeze themselves together, or standing behind to listen, and sometimes audibly responding to what was said. They were of various ages, from the neat matron, with her hair combed smooth and straight, and fastened in a knot with a long pin, to the mere child with a fringe on her forehead and her pigtail down her back. The great majority, however, were girls in their teens. Nearly all wore tight trousers, and about half of them had bound feet.

When at work, they sat at long tables, each with her gross of hair-nets before her. Overhead there was a string, running the length of the table, and from this there hung strips of tissue paper and the various shades of hair required for mending. The inspection and repair of the nets is more highly paid for than the actual making. The former is done in the factory, the latter in the homes.

Each worker has a little board, dotted with headless pins. Spreading over these the nets that are broken, she mends them with a strand of hair. Then twisting a wisp of tissue paper into a fine string, she fastens a dozen perfect nets together by this means.

So far as one could see, the conditions in these factories were not bad. Light and air were abundant, and when the women worked late they were paid for overtime. But these decent conditions, unfortunately, are not typical. They are said to be due, in part, to the fact that several of the managers

are Christians. Even a few such, initiating reforms, can shame others into improvement. Mr. Sherwood Eddy, when referring to the terrible sights he had seen in Chinese factories, said that Chefoo was the most progressive place that he had visited.

There is considerable variety, however, even within this small area. The factories do not all manifest the same humanitarian spirit. One has heard of places where only men are working, which could scarcely be surpassed for disregard of hygiene. There are silk thread factories, where men and boys sit at their looms in low and stuffy quarters, and where the light is so poor that they are obliged to use hand-lamps even in daytime. When work is over, these wretched toilers are often too exhausted to stir, and simply throw themselves down beside their machines. There they sleep a drugged sleep until another dawn calls them to a renewal of the slavery. So it is unsafe to generalize even when speaking of a single city.

At the best, some phases of the silk manufacture are bound to be trying to the health in the hot weather. To sit over a charcoal fire, whereon a pot of water is boiling, and ceaselessly to drop cocoons in and fish them out again through a long summer day, must be worse than uncomfortable. What must the atmosphere be like, when a hundred and fifty others are employed over a hundred and fifty similar little stoves? The Indian fakir sits among his thirty-three fires of cow-dung cake, greatly respected, but he is doing nothing except demonstrating his holiness and piling up merit. The factory hand takes the heat as a matter of course ;

he earns his living literally by the sweat of his brow, and does not ask to be venerated for it.

In the height of the summer the thread factories have to close, but even June is bad enough. The silk-worker is not likely to sympathize with the rapture of the poet, when he exclaims, "What is so rare as a day in June!" It all depends on where you are, and what you have to do! On the shore of Shantung, the day is probably perfection; in the factory it is emphatically the reverse.

CHAPTER XII

AMONG CHINESE FACTORY GIRLS

IN 1921, the Christians in Chefoo, both Chinese and foreign, became deeply concerned for the women and girls working in the factories. As a result, the Factory Association was formed, with a view to social, educational, and evangelistic effort among them. It was estimated that there were some seventeen thousand, who had left the seclusion of their homes and were labouring under modern industrial conditions.

The Chinese secretary prepared a map, giving the location of all factories, the names of employers, and the number of employees, and the field was thus surveyed in a businesslike way. Here was something in which all sections of the Christian Church could unite. A few public-spirited non-Christians also tendered their services. Mrs. F. E. Dilley, of the American Presbyterian Mission, became the president of the organization. A visit to her home, with its large circle of boys and girls, and a glimpse of her work in the Church, made one realize afresh that it is ever the busiest people who can make time for one thing more. Several other missionaries gladly gave their services to the Association, and four Chinese ladies did likewise.

The practical interest of the various churches made it possible to employ two full-time salaried

workers besides. Several of the managers showed a splendid spirit of co-operation. Some six of them, earnest Christian men, even allowed a bit of time for teaching during working hours. In the majority of factories, while no such concession as this could be asked or expected, good opportunities were given during the noon recess, and the girls were encouraged to attend the classes. One factory regularly gave the Bible-women their midday meal, so as to enable them to continue their visiting without having to go home to dinner.

Through Christian influence about half a dozen firms adopted Sunday closing, which, of course, is an inestimable accomplishment in itself. It is to be hoped that employers will learn from this experiment that even from the financial standpoint one day's rest in seven is an advantage.

Needless to say, in order to secure the interest and attention of the factory girls the first consideration was to offer them something attractive, some enticing bait that would lead to a nibble. Singing was found to be satisfactory in this respect. Few things are more uplifting than a good "sing" with a magnetic teacher. If the songs take the form of gospel choruses, this does not detract from the pleasure of the exercise, and perchance the truth may find its way through the medium of music into the heart.

Knitting classes were popular in the noon hour, when there was a genuine sixty-minute period. Some of the voluntary workers went and did the teaching.

The Phonetic Script, here, as in multitudes of

other places, has proved itself a great boon. In the Chinese character every word is represented by its own ideograph. There is no alphabet, so each symbol must be learned separately, and it takes years of study to acquire a fair vocabulary. The Phonetic Script is virtually an alphabet of thirty-nine signs, which can be learned by an apt pupil in an hour or two. Knowing these, one can read any ordinary book without trouble. The Script has put the Bible within reach of the illiterate. It has its drawbacks, like most things here below, but these are small compared with its advantages. One difficulty is that almost any given syllable may mean, in Chinese, some half a hundred things. The character shows, at a glance, to the educated reader exactly what it signifies in the case in point. The Script gives the sound only, and leaves the reader to determine the meaning. But in this respect it is merely on a par with conversation; for, in talking, people naturally judge of the sense from the context, and as a matter of fact experience no difficulty as a rule.

Many of the factory girls, who have had no opportunity of an education, are delighted to be able to learn to read in this new and easy way. The Association prepared a little hymn-book, and sold it to the girls at less than half-price. There was thus a happy correlation between the subjects of reading and singing, which proved a stimulus to both. The hymns were printed, with the Script and the character in parallel columns, so as to encourage the brighter girls to learn to read the latter.

There are many hungry minds as well as hungry hearts among this intelligent people, who have for the most part been denied an education. One woman of nearly sixty longed to go to the Bible School and learn to read. It would not cost very much, as she knew. When she mooted the proposal, the men of the house merely laughed at her, but the daughter-in-law of eighteen, who worked in the factory, understood that mental hunger, and sympathized. "Never mind, mother," she said, "you shall go to school, and I will pay for you out of my hair-net money." But it was not to be. This unselfish little woman caught "flu" at the factory, and was gone in a couple of days, leaving not only a heart-broken mother-in-law, but a wee baby girl.

Of course the one supreme aim in the factory work is the evangelization of these thousands of heathen women. Singing and reading and lantern entertainments all lead up to this. The Chinese have remarkable memories, and when they have sung the hymns and choruses, they soon know them by heart. Those who have acquired the art of reading will sometimes borrow an easy book, like *The Traveller's Guide*, and enjoy the stories at home. The missionaries and Bible-women in their gospel talks make much use of coloured pictures and striking posters, feeling that the teaching through the eye serves to deepen the impression made upon the ear. Our bobbed-hair fad has affected the net industry in the Orient, so that the numbers engaged in it have fluctuated greatly. Accordingly, the Christian work has seen its ups and downs. One

can only write of conditions as they were at the time of one's visit.

Sunday opportunities were fully used by the Association. A regular service for factory girls, conducted by Chinese Christians, was held at eight in the morning, and attracted an audience of between two and three hundred of them. There was another meeting in the afternoon, and a club connected with it, for the promotion of wholesome social intercourse. Every week some six thousand women were hearing the gospel message, given simply and earnestly, and brought right down to the plane of their personal need. (One should add that the success of this effort amongst them led to a similar but smaller attempt in the factories for men and boys.) More than fifty women and girls have been publicly baptized, and have joined the various churches in Chefoo. This is a direct result of having heard in factory workrooms the story of the Man of Calvary. Like the Samaritans, they confess to-day: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Before ever the Factory Association was organized, one here and another there was trying to carry the gospel to the girls. No one has rendered more faithful service than Miss Alice Hunt, of the China Inland Mission, one of the quiet, self-effacing souls who have been compared to "a river flowing underground, secretly making the earth green."

She used to go and sit with the girls at noon, chatting with the different groups, though in the

warm days it was not always easy to stay an hour in that atmosphere. The air did not appear to consist of a mixture of three odourless gases, but rather was suggestive of fried fish, onions, and the hair oil which the Chinese use with such a lavish hand.

Miss Hunt realized from the first that she must not merely talk, but must teach. She felt that however short her time with any group, she must give them something definite. By degrees they became glad to read with her the simple leaflet she had brought, and thus learned a Bible text and one verse of a hymn. Afterwards she would gather them all together for a ten minutes' talk.

And thus the tireless little lady went from room to room, in those factories to which she had access, and made it her aim to give in each the gospel message once a week.

She has had her reward, or at least an instalment of it. She finds it in the girls as well as the women of her mothers' meeting, and the little children, who belong to another story. One of her most treasured possessions is a photograph of fourteen of her own girls, who, with four others who could not be there, are the first-fruits of the factories unto Christ.

There is the one who asked for a service in her own home on Sundays (such as we should call a cottage prayer-meeting), because several of the neighbours wanted so much to hear the Glad Tidings, but could not go to church. This girl was at the time preparing her younger sister for baptism, having bought a catechism for the purpose. There

is that fiery spirit who tossed the incense into the water-butt. Doubtless it was wrong to be angry, but she had learned the truth, and her mother and brother had also become convinced of it. Then in her absence a relative had descended upon them in high dudgeon for following the foreigners' religion, and so, on her return, she found the mother burning incense while the brother had gone to buy paper money. Great was her indignation at such cowardice. She herself was made of sterner stuff. "You may kill me if you like," she cried, "but I am not going to burn any more incense."

Then there is that other equally independent one, a girlish counterpart of "Athanasius contra mundum." Her "world" is, of course, very small—just a Chinese mud village. When she married into a family there, she found herself the only Christian in the place. But she said firmly, "Even if no one else will believe, I am going to follow the Lord Jesus."

How much people would envy missionaries if they had any conception of their joy! With what winged feet would Christ's young messengers speed to distant lands, did they but half realize the glory and blessedness of the service!

CHAPTER XIII

BEAUTY FOR ASHES

IT was a pouring wet day when Miss Cora Simpson and I took rickshaws to the Leper Colony beyond the city wall of Foochow. She had business to attend to in connection with repairs on the little chapel, and one could accompany her without seeming to intrude. Feeling just as we should do in similar circumstances, lepers do not like to be regarded as one of the shows of the city. They came to the doors of their huts to greet their friend as she passed, and there were a few pleasant words for each, for she knew their names and circumstances.

The lepers and I could only communicate by the one word, "Bing-an," which means "Peace." It is the greeting used by the Christians generally, and even the tiny toddlers lisp it when the foreign teacher comes down the street. The lepers could say "Bing-an," for a few years ago they were brought to the knowledge of the Prince of Peace; and the stranger, otherwise dumb, could say it with a depth of meaning it had not known before.

The colony is a Government institution, though the word suggests more than in reality it is. It is simply a village of poor huts and hovels where these afflicted ones can live, rent free, for the remainder of their evil days. The Government, however, is quite willing for the Church to do anything it chooses

to alleviate the condition of the lepers. So medical, educational, and evangelistic work are efficiently carried on.

The beginning was on this wise. Muoi Hua, a respectable Foochow woman, was taken ill, and went for treatment to Dr. Lyon at the hospital of the American Methodist Mission. She had a little education, for she had studied character with her brothers in her young days, so very soon she was reading the Bible to while away the time. She became a Christian.

But synchronizing with the new joy came a new and crushing sorrow, for her disease turned out to be leprosy. When her family learned this, they would have nothing more to do with her, so she found herself suddenly without a home. She was befriended in these terrible circumstances by the missionaries, and finally was appointed to the Leper Colony as their first Bible-woman.

Faithfully she worked for God, and His blessing rested on her labours. The lepers were attracted by the good news, and gradually there gathered around her a little company of Christians.

The medical care is furnished by the Methodist hospital. Miss Cora Simpson was there, in charge of a training-school for nurses, known as the Florence Nightingale School of Nursing and Midwifery. It was, by the way, the first nurses' school registered in China, and she was the founder of it.

She had not been many months settled in Foochow when she undertook, in addition to her other duties, the superintendence of the work at the leper colony. She went out there regularly, held a clinic,

and dispensed medicine. Single-handed was she at first, for she would not ask any of the young nurses to accompany her, knowing their natural fear of the disease. She simply waited for time and example to do their work.

After a while some wanted to go. No harm happened to them, and soon others volunteered. One day Miss Simpson was ill, and could not leave the house, so she consented to "trust" two of the nurses to take her place. Nowadays these Chinese girls do most of this work without assistance, taking turns at the service they are more than glad to render. The missionary needs only to supervise.

One who judges by the outward appearance, on seeing a company of lepers, is likely to have a feeling of repugnance, mingled with pity—the former sentiment predominating. He hardly thinks of them as human, yet after all they have feelings, affections, and needs just like our own, and are entitled to a larger measure of sympathy by reason of their affliction.

What is more, there may be in some of them, hidden under the corruptible body, the soul of a child of God, which hereafter shall shine as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Even under their present handicap they may be living exemplary lives.

The Foochow lepers have caught the spirit of service, and have some genuinely good times in consequence. They very much enjoy the Christmas celebration, and are allowed full liberty in planning for it. They were rather at a loss, the first year, to know how to decorate the church, but finally they got together all the alarum clocks they could muster,

disposed them here and there about the platform, and timed them to go off at intervals during the Christmas programme.

On the next occasion they were less original but more effective. They had heard that the big city church had offerings for the poor at the joyful season, so they felt it incumbent on them to do likewise. It did not matter that they were every one about as poor as it was possible to be—all, in fact, charity patients. There are degrees in poverty, and they thought that the poorest of all ought to be the objects of their loving care.

There were in the village an old man and an old woman, both alone in the world, also a little boy and girl in the same sad case. Not one of the four had a single relative, so they were even worse off than their fellow-lepers. In the Christmas celebration, this pitiful quartette occupied the seat of honour.

Each received one copper tied up in a bit of red paper—for red signifies happiness, and no present is complete unless it is put up in such a wrapping. The old man and woman had a cotton coat apiece. True, these were second-hand, and had often been mended and patched, but they were neat and clean, and the securing of them was a triumph of self-denying love. The little ones were given half a yard of new calico each, which amount suffices to make the *dubeng*, or pocket—an under-garment in which the Chinese carry their belongings. Every one was happy that night, especially those who, out of their deep poverty, had contributed something to make others glad.

It makes one ashamed to hear how unselfishly these people will sometimes care for one another, even those of them who are not Christians. One family in the village kept the rice-store. The woman was a leper, but her husband was only slightly tainted with the disease. The two were perfectly devoted to each other, though the wife was one of the earliest Christians and her husband was a devout idol-worshipper.

The children were most loving and attentive to the sick mother. When a paralytic stroke supervened on the long trial of leprosy, and there was no rest for the weary body, those young men would sit up at night and hold their mother in their arms, hour after hour, to give her a change from the hard bed, and ease the aching back.

It was her death that finally decided the old man to renounce his idols. "I am going to be a Christian," he said, after she was gone. "Do you think that mother knows?" So the household gods were smashed, and the new faith definitely accepted. And the God of his long-loved wife, under whose wings he had at last come to trust, was very tender with him. For within one short week of her departure, He sent the silent messenger to take him whither she had gone, to the home where there shall be no more pain, for the former things are passed away.

CHAPTER XIV

ONE OF HIS JEWELS

THE American Methodists in Foochow erected for the lepers a tiny chapel of red brick, which gives an air of respectability to the whole place. It stands next to the heathen temple which the Government had previously provided for the colony.

Here the villagers used to burn incense daily, before the row of gods who sat in state—the god of prosperity, the god of health, the god of the elements, and the goddess of motherhood. They went to the temple, moreover, to consult the priest in regard to their simple mundane matters. These could tell them whether it was an auspicious time for planting seeds ; whether to try a particular medicine ; whether or no they would that day have good luck in begging. Strange to say, they liked to have their fortunes told, though it did not require a soothsayer to predict that they would live on a few charity coppers a week and suffer physical misery to the end of their mortal lives.

Heathen though so many of them still were, they were interested in the little brick building which was erected on purpose for them, and was, in their eyes, so grand a place. And when pleasant times were planned there, they were glad to go and enjoy them.

The temple was deserted, and the governor of

the city sent men to carry the idols away. He was afraid they might be angry at seeing every one go next door, and might make trouble for Foochow. A pastor arrived before long, and then a teacher for the men and another for the women. This noble corps of Chinese workers, not themselves lepers, are spending their days in trying to bring hope and joy to these sad ones.

As we rode back into Foochow, in our rickshaws, Miss Simpson told me of one of the earlier patients. He came to the settlement because someone had said that there he would find a room in which to die. He was in the final stage of the disease, and was clad in a bit of burlap and a scrap of matting, tied round him with a string. He had not a relative in the world, and had long wandered about in utter wretchedness, so it was a new and strange experience to be kindly treated and invited to the meetings in the brick church.

He settled down in the room allotted to him, and the Chinese pastor visited him there. After having told him the story slowly that he might take it in, he asked if he did not wish to become a Christian. No, he said, he did not. Or rather, he could not do so. "And why not?" asked the other gently. "Because," he began falteringly, "you say your Jesus died for me. He gave Himself for me. I have nothing to give Him in return for a gift like that."

The Chinese idea of propriety is that when you receive a gift, you must make one in return, however small, as a recognition of the kindness. "He wants no gift except yourself," said the pastor.

But this was too strange for belief, altogether impossible and unimaginable, so the visitor had to leave him unconvinced. At the door he said, "When Seegu (Teacher-Auntie) comes, she will tell you just as I have done, that Jesus wants *you*."

The Seegu came not long afterward for a day of dispensing and general inspection. All the lepers gathered round, about a hundred of them, and they were as eager as children to tell her of the new inmate who could not believe the gospel because it was too good to be true. There he was in the midst, ready to add his own word.

"They say He wants *me*," he broke out incredulously, "but how could He possibly want an ill-smelling, rotten old leper like me? It is not so, Seegu, is it?"

My friend told me she felt at that moment as if eternal issues hung on her reply. A human soul was at stake! Could she so speak as to convince him of the love of God? At last she said—and I know the divine love shone out of her eyes as she spoke—"He sent me all the way from America to tell you so—you, and others like you." "I suppose, then, it must be true," he said in bewildered wonder. So he believed and entered into rest.

He learned to love the Word of God, and the gospel hymns they sang in the church. Chiefly he enjoyed crooning to himself the song about "the Father's house, where the many mansions be." He was never tired of telling others the story of the Cross. Some thought him crazy, and said so. "He is always talking about somebody who loves him and wants him. Now how could anyone ever

want such a poor creature as he is? But it is a good thing he has that notion, for it seems to help him to bear his pain."

The days of pain were soon to end for him, however. He lay in his little room awaiting the Home-call, and Miss Simpson went to see him. By this time both feet had dropped off, and both eyes were gone. But he could talk with her of his happy prospect.

His only regret was that he had not been able to do more for his Lord. He had learned the News so late, when already he was hardly fit to move about. "When I reach Father's house," he said, "will Jesus blame me, Seegu, for not getting any more, or will He remember I was just a rotten old leper? I only got fourteen."

"Only got fourteen!" What did the old man mean? Was his mind wandering? Oh no; he meant that he had only won fourteen souls for Christ, during the two years that he had known Him.

In the great day that is coming, when many that are first shall be last and the last first, will not that dear old saint be likely to take precedence of nine-tenths of professing Christians? What percentage of the members of our well-organized churches can say, after years of experience and opportunity, "I have led fourteen souls to Christ"? Perhaps it might be more practical to ask how many of us have ever brought in a single one.

With our many advantages we are apt to boast that we are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. But the One who seeth not as man

seeth, says of the lukewarm Church: "Thou knowest not that thou are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." An old leper who knows the Lord, and strives to make Him known to others, is incomparably more rich and more wise than the self-satisfied, self-centred Christian who never goes out of his way to seek the lost, and who will one day meet his Master empty-handed and ashamed.

Yet a little while, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. From a grave in the colony outside Foochow will rise this child of God, who, in the days of his flesh, was a leper and an outcast. He will have his own place in the blessed company, of whom it is written: "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels."

CHAPTER XV

SHIPWRECKED SOULS

IT is more than six and a half centuries since Marco Polo dwelt in the country called Cathay and made his interesting and extensive travels in the service of Kublai-khan, "the lineal and legitimate descendant of Jengiz-khan and the rightful sovereign of the Tartars."

He speaks of Chengtu as "a large and noble city," and describes its handsome bridges, with their elegant tiled roofs, decorated with paintings. The toll paid by those who crossed them, and the duties on merchandise, attract his attention, and he expatiates on the large revenues obtained therefrom. He also refers to "the neat apartments and shops where all sorts of trades are carried on."

The name "Chengtu" signifies "The Perfect Capital," and sounds, perhaps, somewhat pretentious. It would not, indeed, take a very critical eye to find flaws in its perfection, but its age-long civilization is worthy of no small respect. Though little known to the people of the West, China in the thirteenth century was the greatest empire in the world. When Marco's father and uncles returned home after their first visit to the Middle Kingdom, the trophies that they brought with them were a source of amazement even to the luxurious and artistic citizens of Venice.

Chengtu is fortunate in its situation, for it lies

in the midst of the fertile plain that bears its name, and is world-renowned for its wonderful irrigation system. It is over two thousand years since the great engineer, Li Ping, devised the scheme for utilizing the waters that come down from the north, and spreading them out evenly and economically over the plain. It necessitated cutting away the end of one mountain ridge and making an artificial gorge through another. Channels were dug for the streams, which were further controlled by numerous dams and weirs. Provision was made for dealing with the overplus of water in the summer-time, when the melting snows of the high plateaux threaten the land with flood. The consequence is that never in two millenniums has there been a serious famine in the Chengtu Plain.

Chengtu is fortunate again in its climate. Even the swallows are able to spend the winter in Szechuan, for the season is by no means severe, frost being only occasional, and ice as much as half an inch thick a positive rarity. While the summers are hot and humid, they are less trying here than in Chungking, where the rock foundations radiate the heat.

The Szechuanese are a capable and hard-working people. They have several excellent manufactures, the chief of which is silk. Chengtu is emphatically a silk city. One cannot pass along the streets without realizing this fact. Hanging in the dirty little shanties and along the squalid alleys, one sees skeins of the most exquisite tints, all the more attractive by contrast with their surroundings. The stores display satins and crêpes and tapestries

which are a feast of beauty, for their delicacy of colour and their artistic designs. Their texture is such that it is a pleasure merely to hold them in the hand. If a woman can leave Chengtu with a dollar in her pocket after visiting the silk stores, she deserves credit for temperance in the sense of self-control.

Silk in Chengtu is emphatically a home industry. In all its varied phases it is carried on under the domestic roof, by men, women, and children—though sometimes they prefer to take a little bench outdoors and ply their task in the open air, for the street rather than the cottage is their dwelling-place. Small boys transfer the raw silk to reels ready for weaving. Women and girls, besides doing this, plait a silk braid, sitting down to it in the odd minutes between their daily duties.

We hear the click of the looms as we pass along the streets, and we are kindly welcomed if we care to look in and watch the weavers at their work. Their machines seem to be very much the same as those that were in England in the days of Silas Marner, consisting of a heavy wooden frame with beams at either end. There is a pit underneath, dug in the earthen floor, in which the treadles work. Figured goods naturally require more complex machinery than do the plain ones. From a beam high up in the ceiling there hang bunches of silk cord, and the number of threads that come down to the loom is so great that one wonders how they can ever be kept in order, and how any brain can follow the pattern. There may be as many as thirteen thousand strands in a width of satin, evenly

distributed between the teeth of a fine bamboo comb. In the manufacture of these fancy fabrics one man sits below and throws the shuttle, while high above him, perched on a beam, there is another, who in some mysterious way controls the pattern. He so pulls the threads that the design evolves. We are told that "it is this raising of the strands of the warp which is the essential element in the production of the pattern." The stupid visitor only realizes that marvellously fine work is being done by quick and clever fingers.

Another home industry is silk embroidery, which, strange to say, is done mostly by boys and men. The fabric is stretched on a frame, and in shop after shop we see the needles flying in and out and the flowers growing on the ground in the few moments that we stand and watch. One does not feel much inclined to attempt fancy-work after seeing the Chinese at it !

After a stroll through the streets, and a peep at several different hand industries being busily plied in the front of the stores, we return home confirmed in the conviction that these are a wonderful people and no mistake. If only they could develop unhindered the fine possibilities of their nature ! So clever in head, so skilful of hand, what might they not be and do if their energies were directed aright ? Would that a wise and stable Government might remove the influences which blight their individual and national life, and encourage them to be their own best selves !

Chief among the degrading and debasing influences which militate against domestic happiness, business

efficiency, and national well-being, is opium, and in Szechuan particularly this curse has assumed gigantic proportions. It is sad beyond expression that so able and intelligent a people should be destroyed in such a wholesale way as is the case in West China at the present time.

The principal reason for the utter demoralization of Szechuan by opium is the state of guerilla warfare, which has become chronic. It is still the Middle Ages, and rival chiefs are warring among themselves. If they are using rifles instead of bows and arrows, the halberd and the battle-axe, this is a distinction without a difference. Where there is no law or order, and no recognized head of affairs, evil of every kind will of necessity be rampant. Opium-growers and smugglers will rejoice in their ill-gotten gains along with the highway bandit and the city thief.

Opium is now so abundant that even coolies can get plenty of it. When travellers wish to hire a train of load-carriers and chair-bearers, they find it difficult in these days to secure reliable men, for the half of any gang are likely to be opium sots. Instead of going to a "chair-shop" and calling the number of men required—a matter of a few moments—they may find only a few decent ones in any one place, and may have to make a protracted search before the necessary number can be collected. This is merely one indication of how opium is affecting industry.

Poppy is grown in the mountainous region of West Szechuan, the home of Tibetan tribes. The Chinese go up from the plain and bring it down at tremendous risk, their danger not indeed consisting

in the vigilance of revenue officers doing their duty, but in the greedy and watchful bandits who are waiting to pounce upon the prey. People of means, education, and official position are linked up in this nefarious traffic, along with smugglers and the degraded and ignorant tribesmen. Ladies are not above taking a hand in it at times. It often happens on the Chengtu Plain that a deputy is sent out by a number of families or some social group, to reconnoitre for opium. Women give him their bracelets and other ornaments of gold and silver and jade, with which to trade. Instead of a five-dollar trinket the envoy will probably bring back fifteen dollars' worth of opium. These better-class women sometimes smoke it openly themselves, as well as make money by the sale of it.

"They will go through fire and through water to get it," said a missionary, referring to these messengers who are sent into the mountains. "They scale unspeakable heights and crawl along unthinkable paths to elude the bandits." It is certainly suggestive of how hard men slave in the service of Satan. It reminds one of Tolstoi's assertion that in his pursuit of worldly pleasure in his early days he had "suffered enough to make a martyr for Jesus."

Men going up to the tribes' country after opium have been robbed as often as four times in succession, and yet secured such a profit on the fifth consignment as to make the whole transaction worth while. Now, however, the price is lower on account of the influx of the drug from the neighbouring provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow.

Opium is responsible for a greater variety of evil than is generally supposed. It is like the wicked spirit that took seven others to share its abode. Aside from its physiological effects, which lead to ruin of body and mind, it is closely connected with famine and bloodshed.

The mountain tribes live on the ragged rim of want all the time. Their land produces none too much for their needs at best, and every acre wasted on opium brings famine that much nearer their doors. Of course they always hope to import rice with their big opium profits, but when the price of the drug for any reason goes down, or the price of rice happens to rise, they are in difficulties, and when these two things occur at once, they are "done for." Then we hear of "famine conditions," but in these cases it is not so much due to an "act of God" as to the greed of man, which brings with it its own punishment.

It will be a surprise to some that opium should have any immediate connection with bloodshed on a large scale. But it is a fact. Soldiers swarm over Szechuan, and fighting is chronic. It is of a very desultory kind, and when any one of the leaders is defeated in battle, his army melts away for the time being. It is a case of "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost!" Moreover, these disbanded men do not as a rule give up their arms. When thrown upon their own resources they find it very profitable to dispose of their rifles and other equipment to mountaineers in return for opium. Some time ago a tribe of Hei Shui or Black Water people carried their opium up into

the province of Kansu, and there exchanged it for Russian rifles. They were able to obtain between one and two thousand of these, and used them to attack the towns and villages northwest of Chengtu, robbing and killing the helpless inhabitants.

In another section, a tribe of wild Lolos made a similar deal. When armed and equipped, they descended upon the Chinese villages in the Kien-chang Valley, looting and burning as they went. Their raids were repeated at frequent intervals, and it is said that in the course of a year they killed about seventeen hundred persons.

Szechuan has an unenviable reputation among the provinces of China. When a certain missionary with whom I am acquainted was transferred from Shanghai to Chengtu, his Chinese friends were loud in their lamentations. "The people there are terrible," they said, "and not the people only, but the spirits. Szechuan is a resort for all sorts of bad ghosts." We did not meet any ghosts, but we felt the presence of worse things than the shades of dead men. A whole group of ghastly spectres roam at large. War, disease, and famine are their ominous names, and the driver that whips them on to a terrible activity is none other than the Opium Fiend.

Awful as it is to hear of villages being burned down and citizens slaughtered, there is another side of this opium story which is just as serious, though less sensational. Boys and girls are being silently slain in the flower of their youth by this insidious foe. Seeing the pipe continually in their

homes, they become addicted to it, and sometimes whole families fall victims together. Occasionally even students may be seen indulging in a pipe on the road home, when set free for a while from the restraints of school. A girl of thirteen, a pupil in a mission school, was recently sent to the hospital suffering from some undefined malady. The doctor diagnosed her case as chronic opium-poisoning.

Educated girls are often married to young military officers, and "they go down like nine-pins," as one missionary puts it, "before this temptation." "Military society," he added solemnly, "is a perfect—hell."

Among civil officials, too, there is a great deal of opium-smoking. One day I heard of a woman of good family whose lamp of life was just making its last feeble flicker. A medical missionary, who had known her from childhood, described the pretty little girl of twelve who used occasionally to come into the dispensary, leading her younger brother by the hand. The father was a high official, but he smoked opium. While he managed to break off for a time, the drug soon renewed its hold, and he died in consequence. The mother smoked also, and died in the same manner. All the money had been squandered, and the children were left to make their way as best they might.

The girl, having had some education, became governess in the family of a prominent official who had been a friend of her father's. She tried to do her duty and avoid temptation; but treating is customary in connection with opium, as with us in connection with drink. This proved too much

for her, and soon she was in the mission hospital seeking a cure for the crave.

When she was twenty-four she married a small official, and went to live in Chungking. She had one child, a little boy, but she could not keep him long. Grief then drove her back to opium, and her missionary friend heard nothing of her for several years. She had lately turned up in Chengtu, for a long-threatening disease required a major operation. She was a dissipated-looking wreck, utterly without hope for this world or the next. She had been separated from her husband, but the fault could not be laid entirely to her door, poor thing, for he had three other wives. She wanted her old doctor friend to perform the operation, but the latter could not consent to having the opium pipe brought into the Protestant hospital, so she went to another institution where the rules were not so strict. What chance has she had, with the opium devil dancing triumphantly before her since the day that she was born ?

The wife of the little brother above-mentioned was likewise a victim. Her fall was very natural, and we should need to be more sure of ourselves than most of us are, to be the first to cast a stone at her. She wanted to do right ; in fact, she had heard the gospel and longed to be a Christian. But she was afflicted with a very painful disease, and there was no relief to be found aside from opium. " What was I to do ? " she asked, when at last she reached the city and found the old friend. " There was no foreign doctor in our town, and I knew it would ease the pain." She has been cured, thank

God! and has become a true believer. Therein lies the only hope, for even after the most heroic efforts, opium victims almost always relapse, unless they have learned to trust in a power beyond themselves.

One day, when holding my class for nurses in a mission hospital, I was invited to visit an opium patient. I followed the nurse into the ward, expecting to see some poor, forlorn wreck of humanity. There was a quick movement in the little corner cot, and out from under the bedclothes looked the bright, attractive face of a sixteen-year-old girl. She pleaded so earnestly to be let out, just for a couple of days. Surely she would come back again! A little baby relative was dying, and she really ought to go. The nurses are quite accustomed to these fabrications; they are the usual thing.

That youthful face is even more haunting to one's thoughts than is the sight of the old hags so often seen upon the streets. It suggests the multitude of young things, similarly cursed, who are not in the mission hospital, and who have no Christian friend to whom to go. It makes one think of the many lives that are blighted ere they are well begun, like the rose-bud that will never open, because the worm is there.

I happened to be calling one day on the representative of the American Bible Society, and learned that he had just been doing some rescue work under his own roof. Three young fellows came in from the country, all interested in the truth and eager to study the Bible, yet all under the power of opium.

They consented to be locked up, so he took them into his home, and turned a key upon them. He brought them their food and a little medicine, and gave them the gospel message, which in this case was "mixed with faith in them that heard it." When they departed again, they were all apparently cured.

This same missionary related the story of a man who, years ago, was so confirmed a slave that the people in all the district round knew him as an "opium devil." His wife smoked also. Their poor little daughter found life too hard, and gladly took her flight to a purer home. When dying, she warned her mother that she had "one foot in the pit already," and exhorted her to give up the drug and meet her in heaven. Though the father used to smoke nearly all day long, he had sense enough left to inquire whether Christianity could do anything for him.

He was finally persuaded to enter a mission hospital. He had a terrific struggle, especially on the third and fourth days, when the craving is always at its worst. He realized then that no human power or medical skill could save him, and the conviction drove him to his knees. Like so many other desperate ones who have gone to the Great Physician as a last resort, he obtained help and healing at once. A month later, the missionary said, "he left the hospital a fat and soundly converted man." The juxtaposition of these two adjectives struck me as almost comical, but my friend was telling the simple truth. Opium-smoking reduces the victim to a skeleton, and when a man

begins to put on flesh it is a sign that he has given up the habit.

It is some sixteen years since that man was cured, and he has never once gone back. He has been a self-supporting preacher ever since, and a leader of the Christians in the whole district. One of his sons assists him in the care of the church, and another is an evangelist.

While thousands of such cases might be quoted, there are people at home so ignorant of the daily miracles that are taking place in the world, that they can indite articles on the question, "Is Christianity a failure?" If, instead of theorizing at a desk, they would come out to mission lands and see for themselves, they would soon find an answer to their problem.

More than this, there are some who seem to delight in making depreciatory remarks about missionaries as a class. How dare they? How many of these carping critics would take an opium sot into his own home to cure him of his habit? How many of them would even skimp themselves of comforts to pay for medical treatment for such victims, specially as the outcome is so doubtful and money and trouble might both be lost?

One thing at least I learned in the Orient, namely, that nobody can appreciate missionary work until he sees it for himself. The magazines convey no adequate idea of what is being done, and as for the missionary deputations, they can no more tell of their own splendid service than a soldier can boast of his exploits in the War.

But when a man, forgetful of every selfish

interest, dashes forward to lead a forlorn hope, the world calls him a hero. Under such circumstances it knows how to value a self-renouncing loyalty. But if heroism indeed consists in self-renunciation for the sake of a worthy cause, then no better examples can be found anywhere than those in the mission field. The fight against opium in China looks very much like a forlorn hope. The situation is simply desperate. But the missionaries are standing their ground, with backs to the wall, and "sacrifice" is a word they never associate with themselves. Listen, as the shout of Christ's soldiers comes across the sea: "Are we down-hearted? No!"

CHAPTER XVI

TWO TYPICAL GROUPS

THERE be many that say, "Who will show us any good in the missionary enterprise? Every race has a religion of some sort, that seems to suit the people. Why press Christianity upon them? Even if they come into the Church it will be largely for the sake of the loaves and fishes."

It is easy to criticize and easy to theorize when one is far away from the scene of action. Could these doubters be dropped down among the hills of Chekiang, they would be as still as a stone for the rest of their mortal lives. Though, for that matter, it would make little difference where they landed, for the same signs and wonders are being enacted all over China and the world. They are quiet happenings, like those to which we are accustomed in nature: the dropping of the seed in good soil, the silent influences of sun and rain, and then the thirty-fold, sixty-fold, hundred-fold result. But the natural harvest and the spiritual harvest, are they not alike miracles of divine power and love?

When examinations and commencement exercises were occupying the schools and our ordinary work was not practicable, there came an invitation to a preachers' conference at Yenchow, under the auspices of the China Inland Mission. As is well known, this society, which has more than a thousand

representatives in China, is "the lengthened shadow of a great man." Hudson Taylor, in his broad building of it, made it undenominational and international. Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and others here work together as one, and the Home Councils of the Mission sit in England, America, and Australia. So in a peculiar degree it unites all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and who desire to spread the knowledge of His gospel.

Yenchow is a walled city of Chekiang, one of the coast provinces of China. It is beautifully situated among the hills where the Tsientang River joins the Hweichow. As the crow flies, it is not very far from some of the large centres which have become much modernized within the last few years. But as the crow does not report what he sees, that makes no difference. There are no quick means of transportation for human beings, and Yenchow might just as well be a thousand miles inland.

I took a good train from Shanghai to the capital city of Hangchow, where I met friends going in the same direction. We had a long day on a Chinese launch, and in most respects it was a very pleasant experience. Toward evening we reached the quaint little town of Tonglu, and spied a native craft flying a white flag, with the characters for "Inland Mission" thereon, and we knew that this was the one which had come on purpose to convey us to our destination.

It was one of those long, narrow boats, very roughly put together, and entirely innocent of paint, on which thousands of Chinese live out their entire existence. A walk from one end to the other affords

exercise, and the arched roof provides shelter, and when that is said there is little left to add. The roof, or canopy, is made of strips of bamboo woven into a trellis-work, the whole being filled in with a layer of dried bamboo leaves. It covers the major part of the boat, and is open at both ends. Movable doors can be brought into use at need, but for sundry reasons, it must rain very hard before one wants them put up !

Two things stand out prominently : first, the bamboo poles, some fifteen to twenty feet long, used for punting and for keeping neighbour boats at arm's length ; and secondly, boards. The poles are the boatman's affair, but the boards are for the comfort and convenience of the passenger, and give him an opportunity for exercising his ingenuity. What will boards not make, if properly arranged ? At any rate, they will form tables and beds according to need. That is very simple. The only difficulty is so to arrange them that the various members of the party may suitably dispose themselves for the night, by the aid of a steamer rug or an old sheet, tied up to the ceiling with a string. Of course it is only the foreigners who are sticklers for privacy. The boat-folks wonderingly accept the improvised curtain as one of the stranger's notions.

We were really very well off that night. Gently gliding down the stream, we ate our picnic supper, while enjoying an ever-changing picture of green mountains sloping down to the river's brink. The boatman had taken his basket to the village and had returned with fresh eggs, which his wife cooked

on the tiny stove at the stern. It was very quiet on the river, and only occasionally did we meet another boat. "Silently, one by one, in the infinite meadow of heaven, blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels." And they still shone down on us after we had retired to rest, for we would have none of the doors, and the fresh breeze blew from end to end of our craft. The missionary couple and I had the first-class accommodation; the boatman's wife and her three bright boys slept to the stern of us. The boatman himself must have been content with occasional cat-naps, for whenever we opened our eyes he was standing on the bow, wielding his long oar. Most considerately, when he had occasion to go to the stern, he crawled over the roof, rather than disturb us by passing through the sleeper! So through the night and into the next morning we threaded the silent river. Part of the time the boatman rowed and part of the time he towed, plodding along the narrow zigzag path, with the rope around his waist. And so in due time we arrived in Yenchow.

It was a very happy gathering to which we had come. In order to have ten days' instruction in the Bible and in methods of Christian work, some forty men and women—pastors, evangelists, Bible women, and colporteurs—had travelled long distances. Missionaries from four Chekiang stations did the greater part of the teaching, but there was a course in sermon construction by a Chinese minister who is a graduate of Princeton, and the W.C.T.U. representative gave the temperance lessons.

We learned afterwards that one member of that

little company was there, consciously or unconsciously, for the sake of what temperance teaching there might be. He was an elder of the church and a bright man, but he had fallen somewhat under the influence of wine. The missionary resident in his town urged him to attend the conference, at the same time writing to Yenchow to ask that temperance might have some place on the programme. It was just at the time of the Fifth Moon Feast, when debts are collected, and he feared to leave, being a doctor with a number of patients who owed him money. However, his difficulties were overruled, and he came to the conference. One of the missionaries, who afterwards travelled back on the same boat with him, wrote that he had definitely decided to give up his wine. May he be enabled steadfastly to keep his resolution and become an effective worker for God !

The preachers were open-minded ; they had come expressly to learn. They gathered facts about alcohol and opium, and a few hints about tobacco, in a form suitable for giving out again to their country congregations. They also carried home some charts to help them in their work.

There were other important groups to be met with in that city. For Yenchow, though not a very large or prominent place, boasts one of the national schools of forestry, of which there are only three in China. This honour falls to it because the province of Chekiang is mountainous, and thus a suitable section for the promotion of this important work.

We went to other schools, also, talking about the

harm of cigarettes as well as the danger of wine. There was need, even in this characteristically old-fashioned place, lying, as it does, well off the main routes of travel. One day we met an old man walking at the head of a procession of small boys. He had a gong by which he attracted attention and cleared the way. The boys, mostly stripped to the waist, poor little chaps, carried posters on which were pictures and characters, advertising a popular brand of cigarettes.

Yenchow is also a military centre. For lack of a suitable auditorium, the commander invited us to address the soldiers in the open air, but when the time came there was a heavy downpour of rain that rendered it impracticable. Instead, there was held indoors a meeting of officers who, the colonel said, would retail what they heard to the men under them. This was not to be optional; it was "by order!" Who would dream, when enlisting in the army, that some day he might be required by the commanding officer to stand up and deliver a temperance address? In China, at any rate, it is the unexpected that happens!

Altogether, Yenchow was interesting in more ways than one. One cannot forget the mountains, standing guard behind the town, and looking right down into the mission compound. Or that compound itself, which has the only really attractive garden in the city, where students love to come and sit and missionaries love to have them. Or the city wall, of the peach blossom pattern, of which there is only one other example, and that is in the national capital. The story goes that when a

certain daring man had copied the imperial wall, the emperor sent him a message to the effect that he might choose between destroying the wall and destroying himself, and he preferred the latter alternative. On the wall, looking out over the lake that lies below, is the big stone ox. Yenchow was once visited by a disastrous flood, and an oracle said that if such an ox were carved and placed in a strategic position, the water would never dare invade the city again. The ox might be improved upon as a work of art, but about its effectiveness no one can complain, for the flood has never returned !

But when I think of Yenchow, what stands out in memory's picture is not the unique wall with its bovine monument ; it is not the dining-hall where as one family we sat together eating rice with chopsticks ; it is not the crowd of students nor the group of military men in uniform ; it is not even the mountains and the river, nor anything else either natural or artificial. It is the expression on a few weather-beaten faces ; a something divine and unforgettable, but, alas ! impossible to describe.

Again I am in a little classroom, and I see on the faces of those few poor folk " the light that never was on sea or land," but that shines only on human countenances when the amazing wonder of the love of God has been revealed by the Holy Spirit. This little gathering which so deeply impressed me was not a part of the conference. It was held after the latter had closed, and was a local affair, merely for Yenchow and its out-stations. It afforded an opportunity for those who desired baptism to ask for it and for others to be enrolled as inquirers.

So far as the men were concerned the small company might have been classified according to their heads. Some wore the pigtail so characteristic of Old China. They had come down, probably, from the mountains, where changes penetrate but slowly. Then there was the half-way type—half-way, that is, between the old and the new. Half-way also in another sense, for the hair was shaven completely off the fore part of the head, as far as a line passing over the top of the skull. The back hair was thick and bushy and bobbed. There is something rather comical and incongruous about an old man with a bronzed face and bobbed hair! Lastly, there was the modern man, the college student in neat white suit with smart French crop.

All was very quiet; there was no excitement, but it was nevertheless thrilling to see those men rise and ask for admission to the visible Church of Christ. They had to submit to public questioning, which was a severe ordeal for some of them. One dear old fellow said, "I trust in Jesus, I do." "Why do you trust Him?" asked the missionary. "What are you trusting Him to do?" His face spoke clearly of a real confidence, but the lips could not give expression to his thought before the crowd, and tears came into the old eyes as he hesitated. Next him sat another candidate, his face burnt brown as the earth in which all his life he had worked, raising vegetables for market. He could not contain himself or wait his turn, but when his neighbour faltered, he jumped to his feet, crying, "I know why *I* trust Him; He put away my sins upon the Cross." Several times the man on the

other side had to lay hands on him and hold him down, for he was too happy to keep still. When at last his turn came, he was asked among other things if he intended to be a help to the church. "I have never missed attending Sunday service," he said, "and I never will, but I can't speak. I've got it down here" (pointing to his heart) "but it won't come out of my mouth." Some came out, as was evident, but probably only a small fraction of the joy that was within. "And I don't understand the characters," he added, "so I am like a blind man, but if I could learn to read, perhaps I might help a bit."

As for the first old man, who could not answer, he was later accepted for baptism, for the church knew him as a long-time seeker and a true believer. As he stood in the water the following Sunday morning, his cup of joy full to the brim, he said aloud over and over again, "I do trust Him, I do, I do."

But to return to that little meeting. An interesting man, about thirty years of age, sat in the row behind these two. He was a mason by trade, quiet and intelligent. In a place several days' journey from Yenchow he happened to hear the gospel, and on his return to his home neighbourhood he made further inquiries. He received a catechism, and not only set to work to study it, but soon had four or five men and boys reading it with him every evening when the day's work was done. Their village is twenty-four *li* (eight English miles) distant from Yenchow, but the little group walk in to church every Sunday, doing the sixteen miles un-

grudgingly in all weathers. They feel it is worth while, for they get what they come for.

After a few earnest souls like these had been accepted for baptism, an opportunity was given to any who wished to become inquirers. From the bench against the white-washed wall there rose a young man, unkempt and rather timid, with his pigtail wound around his head. They whispered to him to take it down, for when addressing anyone it is not proper or respectful to wear it pinned up. So, facing the audience, he arranged his queue, smoothed out his old blue coat, and straightened himself up. He had come from the top of a mountain where there are several small and scattered villages. (Incidentally it is rather wild up there and the boars still roam the woods.) In one of these primitive communities there was a Christian, and he passed on what he knew. So this young fellow—a carpenter, by the way—had come down to learn more. Life looks quite different to him since he heard from his neighbour of the Carpenter of Nazareth, the God-man Christ Jesus.

After him, in striking contrast, there arose the dapper young student. A fine, strong face was his, and one felt it took considerable courage publicly to express a desire to be a Christian, for the college is just across the road and the other fellows would soon know. Often has the missionary's heart yearned over the crowd of boys in the two institutions nearby, but he has to divide himself among three cities and several out-stations, and there is no worker who can specially devote himself to the students. As usual, "the labourers are few."

This young man is the first among them to venture to come out for Christ ; let us hope and pray that his brave example may be largely followed.

This is only a bit torn at random out of a story. Much might be written about those in that little gathering who sat by, silently rejoicing over these new-born souls. They, too, had been gathered one by one, taken years ago out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set firmly upon the Rock, with a new song in their mouths.

To take just one instance. On the front bench sat the dear old patriarch, Mr. Chao. Once he was a fortune-teller, quack doctor, and gambler, while in the first place a tailor, with his shop on the street. There was said to be no worse a man in town. One day the missionary dropped in, sat down for a chat, and told him the story of the gospel. On leaving he invited him to come to church, and he turned up next Sunday. Within a few months he applied for membership. That was more than sixteen years ago, and he has never missed a Sunday service in all that time. He became very useful as he advanced in knowledge of the truth, and finally, in order to devote himself to the work of an evangelist, he gave up his business. When converted, he was deeply in debt. In China, after a certain interval, debts, by an unwritten law, are considered "dead" and cannot be collected. But Mr. Chao paid no attention to this custom, and worked for years to meet his old obligations. Religion is a more real thing to him than to some of the "Christian" critics who are "not interested in foreign missions." And he is merely one example from one place. Of the Yen-

chow Christians alone, the rest of the story were long to tell.

Is it worth while to devote one's life to such service as this? Will it mean solid satisfaction in the long run if a young man decides thus to spend himself? The answer must depend on one's estimate of the value of a soul. To those who believe that "the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself," are as nothing in comparison with a soul capable of a glorious immortality, there surely can be no wiser way in which to invest the one brief earthly life.

CHAPTER XVII

FAITHFUL OVER A FEW THINGS

ALL who carry a Kodak will probably agree that it is not very satisfactory to try to take a wide expanse of country. The scene may be glorious, like that of the Yangtse viewed from the heights of Kuling, but probably it will not make a good picture. As you stand on some vantage-point of rock, you delight in the rich green velvet of the nearby mountain-sides, and you look down to the vast plain where eight rivers join that mighty stream at short intervals, while ranges of hills rise one behind another, and in the foreground a few jagged peaks stand sentinel over the valley. After the first rapture of delight, your next thought is for the home folks. They, too, must see this! The camera will give it to them. But just here comes the surprise, for your picture turns out tame and disappointing. The subject is too vast and you cannot do it justice. But take that one peak with the cloud resting on it, or that bit of mountain path and the tall lilies growing beside it, and you have a picture that will give real pleasure.

So it is also with things of a higher order. Often we lose their meaning and their beauty when we take the vaster views. We read the annual report of the missionary society, which tells about so many churches, so many schools, so many hospitals, so

many converts, and we do not realize its meaning at all deeply. A better idea would be gained if we could closely examine one spot in the mission field and learn to know the people living there. This privilege, of course, can be enjoyed by comparatively few, but these again may pass on to others what they see.

That is why I want to tell a little more of Yenchow, and the humble band of Christians who gather about the missionary and his wife.

Those Yenchow folks are just like other folks, but Christ's power to save has been illustrated in some of their lives in a way that is worth recording. As in most places, "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the weak things," and has worked through them. I saw day by day in the missionary's home a feeble old man who did not seem to be equal to any kind of task unless, perhaps, he could write a few characters at need. As his sight was beginning to fail, even that old-time occupation was not easy, and he was deaf besides. While the avenues of human communication, however, were closing up, the way to God lay wide open, and this old saint was still a man of much power in prayer.

Here is his story. About thirty years ago he had occasion to go to Ningpo on business. On his way back he saw a colporteur preaching on the street, but he did not stop to hear what he had to say. These words only did he catch, "Jesus the Saviour," and he took a Gospel which somebody offered as he passed by. On reading it he became interested, and longed to know more, but there was no man to guide him.

About ten years later, Mr. Fairclough came out to China and was stationed at a town called Heavenly Platform. From this platform he could see numerous villages which needed the gospel, and as soon as possible he planned a trip among the mountains. A certain Christian shoemaker offered to accompany him, and off they went, with their beds rolled up in two bundles, a few necessities in the way of food, and a supply of literature. Reaching a village on a rocky mountain slope, they found the people decidedly unfriendly. The women, in sudden fright, seized their children and ran away, but the men gathered round in an angry mob. "This must be the one," they said; "let us throw him over the cliff and his companion with him!" There had been an epidemic in the village and several children had died. Rumour said that a "foreign devil" had poisoned the wells. Whether this particular foreigner was the actual culprit or not, at any rate, he should pay the penalty.

Mr. Fairclough had already unpacked his literature, and he picked up an almanac on which there stood out prominently the words, "Jesus the Saviour." "See," he said, "we do not come to destroy life, but to save. We are here to tell about Jesus the Saviour." "Jesus the Saviour?" they repeated. "Why, that is what Chao Shan is always saying." "Who is he?" asked the missionary, "and where does he live? Take me to him." "He lives in the next village," they replied, by this time quite forgetting to kill him. Some of them actually went with him to the man's house. Chao Shan received the two with great joy, and producing his tattered

Gospel, he told them how for ten years he had been longing to learn more. In a little while he was received into the Church.

Later, the missionary was asked to leave the Heavenly Platform where he had established a firm footing, and go and open up the anti-foreign city of Yenchow. Chao Shan heard of the new effort, and felt there would be danger for his dear friend in that place. So he packed up his bed and his few other belongings and slung them on his bamboo pole. After a tramp of six days over the mountains he reached the walled city of Yenchow, and announced that he had come to help. He was a true godsend to the then lonely missionary in his difficult and perilous position. Help he did, right along through the years, and now that the opposition is over and the work well established, he still helps in his old age by a life of intercession.

The shoemaker who so nearly went over the cliff is now the beloved Pastor of Heavenly Platform Church. His son has had a good education, and is a fully qualified doctor in charge of a large hospital. This institution is not supported by any mission, but is the contribution of a wealthy and public-spirited Chinese towards the improvement of his own town. The doctor is an earnest Christian and is following in the footsteps of his father, while enjoying greater influence and opportunity.

Of the transformations effected by the gospel in the city of Yenchow, the nail-maker was one of the brightest examples. Years ago he used to come peeping in at the church door during service. Like so many Chinese labourers, he was stripped

to the waist. His one garment was of patched blue cotton, and his hands and feet were always black. When the missionary addressed a kindly word to him, at once he was off like a shot.

By degrees, however, he gained confidence, and at last one evening he dared to enter the foreigner's abode. There grew up within him a desire to learn to read. During the heat of the summer there are about two months when the nail-makers cannot ply their trade. He asked permission to stay during that time in the compound. He would bring his own bed and his own rice if the missionary would teach him the characters. He proved an apt scholar and a handy man all round. Mr. Fairclough needed some one to care for the pony and accompany him on itinerations, and this man consented to go. Not many months afterwards he became a Christian, and was the first convert in the city. Later, he developed into a colporteur, and now he is in full charge of the chapel at one of the out-stations.

They have a comfortable little church at Yenchow. It was not built with mission money, nor was foreign help needed in buying the land. It is thoroughly Chinese, a monument of loyal love and sacrifice, though the missionary did privately raise enough to furnish it, to encourage the faithful Christians.

Here is the story of the man who gave the lot. One evening, long years ago, Mr. Fairclough was wending his way home after a trip into the country. As he entered the West Gate he noticed a disconsolate-looking fellow standing by the roadside. He was one of the wood-cutters who come down from the mountains with their bundles of fuel to sell

upon the street. They may be seen any afternoon lined up near this gate. Most of them had sold out by this time and returned home, but he still stood there with his load.

“Haven’t you been able to sell your wood?” asked the foreigner sympathetically, as he passed. “No, and it does not look as if I should get rid of it to-night,” the man replied. “I came down the mountain too late.” “Come along with me and I will buy it from you,” said Mr. Fairclough. The bit of help and sympathy prepared the way for the message. Giving him a Gospel, the missionary bade him read it and mark the characters he did not know. He told him to come back with these difficulties and he would explain them, and he also invited him to the Gospel Hall.

The man was surprised to learn that there was a welcome in so respectable a place for the likes of him. He washed and brushed up as best he could, and made his way to the service. Six months later he applied for membership, and was duly received into the Church.

And now the time drew near for the missionary’s furlough. He must leave the little group of babes in Christ, not to see them again for at least a year, and his heart was heavy with concern for them. Feeling specially anxious about this man, he called him one day into his study and prayed with him that he might be kept firm in the faith. When they rose from their knees, Iong Seng said earnestly, “Oh, don’t doubt me; I shall never go back.”

He was as good as his word. Though it was nearer two years than one before Mr. Fairclough

could return to his little flock, this man was there to greet him when he got back. He had improved in appearance, and was doing well in his humble business. After the missionary had had one Sunday in his own station, the wood-cutter proffered a request. Would he not spend the following Lord's Day in his village upon the mountain? His friend gladly consented, and, to his great surprise, he found no fewer than thirty people gathered in one of the homes to worship God. They had all become interested through the testimony of the wood-cutter.

After a few years of faithful service he was taken ill and was brought to the home of his friends, who nursed him lovingly. As he grew weaker they said one day, "We think, dear Iong Seng, perhaps the Lord may be going to take you to Himself." "I rather think so, too," he replied, quite satisfied. The following Sunday he asked that the Christians would come and pray with him, so the little church, which now numbered eighteen members, gathered in his room.

He wished the school teacher to take down what he had to say. He told how poor and miserable he had been when first he heard the gospel, and how God had blessed him both materially and spiritually. Now, if he was going Home, he wanted to leave his savings to the church. His various belongings were worth altogether about four hundred dollars. After setting aside fifty dollars for the care of his father's grave, he wished the rest to be used to buy a piece of ground on which to build the much-needed church. Then, thinking that should he after all recover, the Lord's work would lose by it, he added, "And if I get well, I will give two hundred dollars

anyway. I can manage on two meals a day." But in a few hours he was not, for God took him.

His was the first Christian funeral held in that heathen city. People paused in their work as the little procession went by, so strange was it to see anyone carried to burial without the accompaniment of wild noise and wailing. Instead of all this there was the melody of a Christian hymn, telling of a life beyond the grave. A happy life it must be, thought those who had been allowed to look upon his face. The children when they saw him, said, "He's laughing!" No wonder a smile was printed on his features as he passed from the toil and suffering of earth to Him in whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore!

And now the church stands on the bit of land bought with the savings of Iong Seng. His name, by the way, means "Everlasting Fruitfulness," and strikes one as appropriate.

At home one often hears references to "rice Christians." They no doubt exist. Otherwise human nature in the East would be different from what it is in England and America. But they are not so common as some folks think. It stirs one's indignation to hear self-complacent individuals talk in that superior strain about people and things of which they are entirely ignorant. Probably they have never themselves done or suffered anything for the gospel's sake, while the humble wood-cutter, nail-maker, and cobbler, hidden away among those mountains of China, may be giving to the point of sacrifice, or risking their very lives in the service of Christ.

CHAPTER XVIII

MISSIONARY HOUSEKEEPING

“**I** MAGINATION and memory are but one thing,” wrote Thomas Hobbes in the seventeenth century. While doubtless it is true that reproductive imagination and creative imagination have much in common, they nevertheless paint very different pictures on the mental canvas. Sometimes I try to recall the concepts I entertained of missionary homes in the days of my ignorance. They were absurdly wide of the mark, as I have since had ample opportunity of learning.

My work has thrown me into intimate relations with the missionaries of many different societies. Since temperance propaganda has no concern with denominational distinctions, I have been privileged to co-operate with Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Quakers, Presbyterians, Brethren, Lutherans, and various others.

The nationalities, moreover, of the workers show a variety as wide as their church affiliations, for the list includes Americans, Canadians, English, Scotch, and Irish, Norwegians, Germans, Danes, Australians, and a single French lady.

One could not live with them under varying conditions in a dozen Chinese provinces without getting some insight into the peculiar difficulties of life in the interior and its unexpected alleviations. Being

a traveller, I saw things also from the point of view of the transient guest, and so can easily understand the origin of some of the unintentional, but none the less harmful, misrepresentations of missionaries.

Tourists sometimes report having seen "palatial dwellings," with spacious grounds attached to them. "What foundation is there for this statement?" ask some of the home supporters.

It goes without saying that there is a great variety of accommodation. Some missionaries live in native quarters, decidedly inconvenient and uncomfortable, but the majority have "foreign" residences suited to their needs. Some boards, notably the American ones, are much better off than others, and accordingly furnish their representatives with everything calculated to promote health and efficiency. A tennis court, for instance, is one of the modern provisions.

Homes for single ladies occasionally afford each inmate a private study, where she may receive her teacher and her various callers. The commodious and comfortable common rooms, together with these snug sanctums, give an air of luxury to many a dwelling. But what looks like luxury to the visitor is sheer necessity to the resident worker. One could not receive students and inquirers, and deal with them at all effectively, without the opportunity of privacy.

As for the large living-rooms, they are essential, because the missionaries must at all times keep open house for travellers. It would be unthinkable to let a fellow-worker go to a Chinese inn. Even

business men, as a matter of fact, sometimes seek and find refuge at the mission station. There is a recognized rate for board, so the mission is not actually out of pocket, but the dwellings must be large enough to admit of guests being constantly received.

I recall staying with a doctor and his wife, who were in the act of moving into a new house. My host was building a hospital hard by. All the stones, by the way, had to be trimmed by hand, so it was a big business, and involved having a considerable number of workmen on the spot. He was keeping an eye on every detail, down to measuring the guest-room fireplace for the grate that had to be made, and was doing, maybe, half a hundred odd jobs in a day. His wife, in spite of feeble health, took me round the schools and translated my addresses, as well as entertaining me in the incomplete house. Yet when two business men turned up—the steamer agent and a friend of his—she disposed of them, with their army cots, in the attic. It is the missionary way !

The fact that land costs less in the East is overlooked by some of the critics. Surely it is better to build a spacious house than a cramped one, specially if you can get it for half the money that you would have to pay at home. These comforts, reasonable though they be, have not yet, however, become general in China. I have stayed in many a mission station of the more old-fashioned type, and with people whom no critic, however ascetic his ideal for others, could accuse of being too comfortable.

Let one peep suffice. I had had a hard journey. Through the miscarriage of a message, I had alighted at the wrong station in a city of 750,000 inhabitants. Not a foreigner was in sight. A soldier minded my baggage while I tried to make inquiries, and, by the way, refused the proffered tip. It was after dark when I rattled through the narrow streets in a rickshaw, scanning the crowds in vain for one white face. At last I reached the Y.M.C.A., and there they provided an escort to take me another hour's run to my destination in the suburbs. It was a Chinese house, roofed with the usual rounded tiles, and the walls were whitewashed. Everything was most simple, and the bedroom furniture was evidently to some extent home-made. Dainty covers hid a packing-case that did duty as dressing-table, and everything put together would have fetched but a few dollars at an auction. But the whole place spoke of refinement and peace.

After the experience of the previous evening it was no wonder that I slept late. There still abides with me the waking vision of one not unlike an angel messenger entering the room that Sunday morning. Wings, indeed, she lacked, but that was a detail. The gentle face was surrounded by a halo of white hair, and she was carrying a breakfast-tray. Everything was exquisite. The little doyley was of finest Chinese handiwork ; a sprig of parsley lay upon the butter pat, and there was a red, red rose beside the plate. Some people who are living on very little can yet offer such exquisite hospitality that its fragrance remains through the years.

How much flowers may do to lend beauty to a

room! Truly did Longfellow speak of them as "the stars that in earth's firmament do shine." Ridiculous as it may seem, travellers have actually been known to criticize missionaries for the floral wealth seen in their homes. Yet the glorious blooms that decorated the parlour were probably just wild flowers after all!

In Kuling, the beautiful summer resort in Central China, the mountain slopes are gay with flowers, singularly lovely and varied. There are big, flame-coloured lilies, and still larger white ones, resembling our arums, and gorgeous tiger-lilies with their petals curled back, revealing their brilliant spots. Then the bluebells growing abundantly seem "like the heavens upbreking through the earth." They crop out from the crevices in the great, grey rocks, and play bo-peep between the trees, here and there and everywhere. The parnassus is an exquisite little treasure, with a delicate fringe round every snowy petal. But after all, there is nothing more pleasing than the ferns which grow so luxuriantly in those parts. The Chinese make them up into balls, with a reed handle by which to hang them. They bring them round to the foreigners and sell them for a few coppers. One evening, as we sat in her cottage high up on the mountain-side, my hostess looked round the room and remarked, "These few flowers that we have here, though nothing out of the way, would cost five dollars back home."

"Missionaries must have a very good time," some will say, "staying in such lovely spots for months together, and perhaps owning their summer

homes in the mountains or by the sea." Yes, and they need it too. These cottages have been a good investment, whether for boards or individuals, and have saved many an expensive furlough, not to say many a precious life. It is necessary to escape the prostrating heat and to avoid cholera and other epidemics. It is specially important that mothers and children should get away from the cities, even if the menfolk can only come to them for part of the time.

But it is altogether wrong to suppose that when missionaries are in the hills they are doing nothing. The younger ones, still wrestling with the language, bring their teachers, and grind for several hours a day. Leaders are probably engaged in translations or other literary work. One is writing a commentary ; another is preparing a course of Sunday-school lessons. A friend with whom I stayed one summer wrote a hundred personal letters to helpers at home during her all too brief vacation. "Scholarship letters," as they call them, are a heavy tax on those who have charge of mission schools. Altogether, missionaries find the holidays a very good time for getting work done !

Turning from the environment, natural and artificial, let us give a passing thought to the inner man ! People at home so often ask what missionaries have to eat. In this respect China was full of surprises to me. Everything was so much pleasanter than I had expected. There was so large a degree of creature comfort ; in fact, we really lived as well as at home.

It is dangerous to generalize, but in most places

there is a plentiful variety of fruit and vegetables, specially the latter. And who knows how to cook them better than John Chinaman? The missionaries live in "foreign style" (which means European and American), only going occasionally to Chinese feasts, and now and then having a Chinese meal at home for a change.

When one has abundance of eggs and chickens, with such vegetables as brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cabbage, spinach, squashes, and bamboo shoots, one does not pine for several varieties of home-killed meats. The housekeeper may have difficulty in regard to milk and butter, but they are usually provided somehow. As for fruit—oranges, bananas, and apricots are obtainable in many parts, not to mention several of our common kinds hardly good enough to boast of. In the ports there is the occasional luxury of papayas or mangoes. In North China, throughout the winter the luscious persimmon forms a staple of the breakfast menu. The sensations it provokes are quite different from those usually associated with its namesake in the United States.

The missionary dinner-party is a delightful function. It is perhaps more often spoken of as a "station supper." Everybody goes. The several cooks divide the culinary responsibilities. The "boys" of the various houses carry the things and spread the feast. They make it very attractive. The lamps or candles with their shades of coloured paper shed a subdued light. The smilax or its substitute gracefully decorates the table. At each seat there is likely to be a hand-painted place-card

with a Chinese scene cleverly conveyed in a few suggestive strokes.

A tourist happens to be passing through, and is welcomed into the circle. Lacking imagination, probably, he does not realize that station suppers mean simply a pooling of resources, a "breaking bread from house to house." He enjoys a very good dinner and is waited on by capable servants. He never guesses that the place-cards were painted by a student just for love, or maybe to earn a trifle towards her school expenses. He does not conceive of the social evening as an occasional break in the regular routine. He simply has the impression that Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so gave a very fine dinner-party when he was there, and that missionaries' salaries must be higher than necessary. He goes home and airs his views. Manifestly, the moral for the missionaries is, "Don't invite the next one." But how can the kind souls help it?

The servant question affords ample opportunities for misunderstanding on the part of those whose imaginations are severely limited. When a missionary on furlough is asked how many servants she keeps, and replies that she has some three or four, certain of the hard-working church members, who wash their own dishes three or four times a day, thereat throw up their hands in holy horror! But they are not even surprised when they read stories of a bygone age about the dames who had a whole bevy of handmaidens to do their simple housework. In the West we have the service of a thousand people handed to us over the counter for its equivalent in pounds, shillings, and pence. But

China affords nothing of the kind, at any rate in the interior. So the missionary must either have an adequate force of servants, or give up the work that she came especially to do.

No one without visiting the mission field can realize how much labour is required in connection with housekeeping, or how wide and practical a knowledge of domestic science a missionary needs to have. Of course life in the ports is very different from that in the interior, and approximates more nearly to home conditions, but at best there is a great gulf fixed between East and West. Since, here again, generalizing is unsafe, let us take a definite section—for instance, the interior of Szechuan.

Let us consider such necessities as bread and water, sugar and salt, with one or two more that may suggest themselves. The missionary cannot send to the grocer's for a sack of flour. She buys wheat, which has to be cleaned and ground and sifted, and beside all these processes incidental to bread-making, she must prepare her own yeast. Oats, buck-wheat, and corn must be treated in the same way as wheat. This entails a good deal of work, and it is dirty work too. The last and least detail is the mere baking ! Rather different, surely, from stepping over to the shop for a loaf !

The water comes from the well. The task of drawing it and carrying it is no small part of the daily labour of a household. But besides this, it must all be boiled, cooled, and filtered, and precious lives depend on thoroughness and vigilance in these matters.

When the milk comes from a cow instead of a can it is a greatly prized luxury. In some places the animal is brought round to the house once a day, and milked in the presence of a responsible person, to avoid adulteration and insure cleanliness. Even after these precautions all milk must be boiled. If there is sufficient milk to spare, the butter is made at home, which means another minor household job. Otherwise the "foreigner" must send away for the tinned article. This involves considerable extra expense, on account of the difficulties of transportation.

Salt and sugar must be refined before they are fit to use. Salt, as it is seen in the streets, would never be recognized by the newcomer. Those dirty, dark-brown masses do not suggest the slightest connection with a dinner-table. The native sugar, expressed by the neighbouring farmer in his rough shed, is just as far from the ideal. The housekeeper makes her own vinegar and cures her own ham and bacon. Many ladies also boil their own soap.

The provisions that can be bought "on the street," such as meat and vegetables, must be fetched by the cook, for there is no such custom as that of delivering at the door. Since in many stations missionaries live outside the city wall, where land is cheaper and air better and schools can be more satisfactorily carried on, it follows that the cook spends a large proportion of his time between the compound and the market.

His shopping reminds one of the great difficulty of keeping accounts. How missionaries manage to do it at all is a problem too deep for the amazed on-

looker. The value of a silver dollar varies from day to day. On Monday you may get, say, 120 coppers for it, and on Saturday perhaps 140. The same dollar at the money-changer's will bring you eleven dimes and some coppers over, but if you buy a ten-cent article in a shop and tender your dollar, you only get nine dimes back. The missionary who receives the cook's account has to consider the day's rate of exchange as well as to understand the intricacies of Chinese shopping. She needs a good supply both of brains and patience! No doubt she would rather lose a few coppers personally than work out the troublesome problem, but accounts must be balanced exactly, or servants will get into bad ways.

So far as my own experience went, the muddle reached its maximum at Kirin, Manchuria. There they used both Japanese and Russian money in the city, but Chinese (so-called Mexican) at the railway station. To cap it all, they had a local paper currency of various denominations, ranging as low as five cents. Dirty morsels measuring about an inch and a half by two inches formed a regular medium of exchange in the native shops.

These few considerations may roughly indicate why it is that missionaries need more servants than do the folks at home, with their endless provision of ready-to-eat foods and their wonderful variety of labour-saving devices.

But no mere onlooker can attempt to give any adequate idea of missionary housekeeping. Suffice it to say that it is very dangerous to judge of things we have never seen and cannot understand. It is a pity that the average well-meaning critic cannot

have a month of practical experience on the spot. It would at any rate be humbling, and probably in consequence beneficial.

This spirit of criticism is sadly prevalent in the Church to-day, specially in regard to matters that belong to a higher plane than housekeeping. It cannot be denied that "the time is out of joint." But far better, surely, than criticism of others, however just, is the steady witness to our crucified and risen Saviour, who at His Coming will make all things new.

As for the missionaries, their judgment is with the Lord, and their work with their God. Let no man trouble them, for they bear in their bodies, in many cases, the marks of the Lord Jesus. They have suffered in times past, and now in these strange days, so fraught with dark possibilities, they stand ready, if need be, to suffer again.

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